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THE
GOSPEL OF ST. MARK

Text-Books of Religious Instruction.

EDITED BY THE

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THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK. By the Hon. and
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THE
GOSPEL OF ST. MARK
WITH NOTES

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P R E F A C E

IN putting together these notes on the narrative of St. Mark's Gospel, I have tried to keep in view two classes of readers.

First, those who are anxious to read the Bible with profit, but are baffled by finding that the meaning of a great deal of it escapes them. They hoped to gather new ideas, and to see hidden connexions; but this is very difficult to do, and, for many, almost an impossibility. They pore over the familiar words, but cannot feel that the effort has deepened their knowledge of the meaning.

Now, it might be supposed that out of the abundant store of learned and thoughtful commentaries which exists, it would be possible to find for any such student exactly what he wants. So it would, but at the cost of sparing him all effort of his own. It is a terribly common experience for many, to read an attractive piece of Biblical commentary and enjoy it and go their

way ; and then to discover, after a few weeks, that it has left no trace whatever behind. The excellence, the charm, the completeness of many of these writings seem to make matters worse. They tend to delude the reader into thinking that he need not exert himself, and the result is that, beyond a passing feeling of edification, little is gained.

No reader of these notes will, I trust, be under any such delusion. They are meant to help him if he is willing to work, but they assuredly will not deceive him if he is not. They merely suggest lines of thought, giving references for the following out of the suggestions. Read by themselves in an arm-chair they will be manifestly and undeniably useless. But if any one is ready to take a little trouble, I am in hopes that, considering the eminence of the writers whom I have laid under contribution, there will be found some profit in working out the hints here given.

The other class of readers for whom the book is designed is that of teachers. Only quite the elder boys of a public school would be able to make anything of the notes without help. But a skilful teacher would find matter in them

which he could illustrate and amplify suitably to a class of fifteen-year-old boys or girls. And there is no reason why they, as well as the teacher, should not use the book.

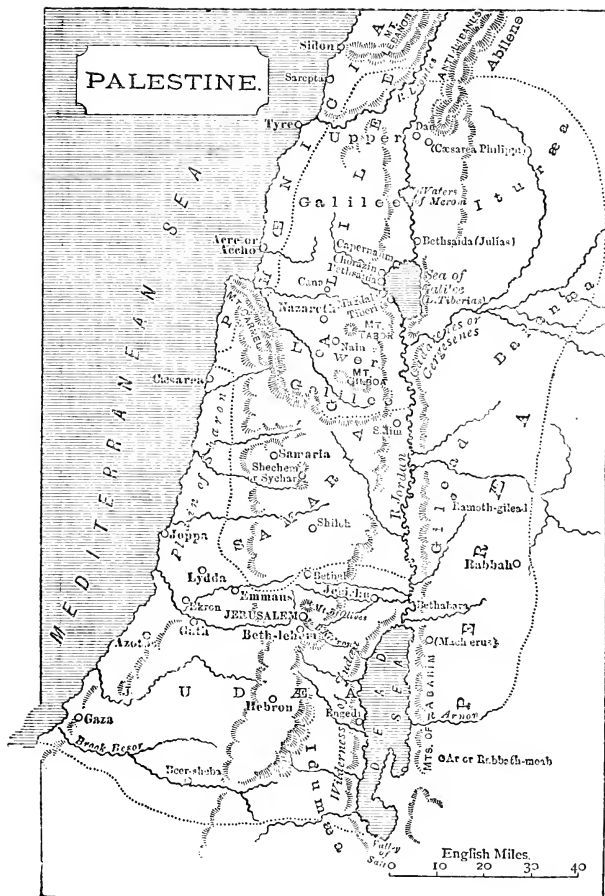
Of course a teacher may find a full commentary more serviceable. But many teachers have neither time to read anything of the kind, nor opportunity of securing the book.

The first series of notes in each page contains, very briefly, some necessary facts. Those below the waved line are suggestions of thoughts and connexions with other books of the Bible.

I have thought it well to consult commentaries as different in tone as Mr. Latham's "Pastor Pastorum," and Father Benson's "Final Passover." Some hints are also due to Dean Luckock's "Footprints of the Son of Man in St. Mark;" Godet on St. Luke; Edersheim's "Life and Times;" Sadler's Commentaries; Trench's "Parables, Miracles, Studies in the Gospel;" Isaac Williams' "Devotional Commentary;" and Dr. Bruce on the Parabolic Teaching of Christ.

E. LYTTTELTON.

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THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK

CHAPTER I.

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ;

2. As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

Ver. 1. The meaning seems to be that the beginning of the Gospel was the preaching of John. **Gospel** = 'good tidings.' **Son of God**, literally 'Son of the God.' **Jesus** = 'Saviour.' **Christ** = 'the Anointed.'

Ver. 2. Two prophecies are blended—(a) Mal. iii. 1 freely quoted. Notice that St. Mark's alterations bring

1. *The gospel of Jesus Christ.*—These familiar words cannot only mean the moral precepts given by Christ. Those precepts were loftier in tone than any that had ever been uttered. But lofty precepts, especially when they are addressed to weak and sinful people, do not constitute good tidings ; they only show the sinner how far

he is from virtue. The words clearly mean 'tidings of salvation' brought about for man by God in the work of His Son. It is to be remembered that what Christ did is even more important and essential than what He said.

2. It was 400 years since Malachi had prophesied, 700 since Isaiah. The expression,

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

out the divinity of Christ. The words, as he gives them, read like a colloquy between the Persons of the Trinity (Gen. i. 26). Our Lord quotes the words as they are here given (Matt. xi. 10). (b) Isa. xl. 3.

Ver. 4. The tense in the Greek expresses suddenness. **Baptism of repentance.** Baptism, known to the Jews as the ceremony used in the admission of the heathen to their covenant, and washings were common as cleansing from legal defilements, leprosy, &c. John therefore proclaimed that purification was needed not only for heathen, but for all the Jews. They were in need of repentance, leading to the putting away or forgiveness of sin.

‘Prepare ye the way,’ would have a distinct meaning to people living in half-civilised countries, where the roads are always put in order to welcome the visit of a great personage.

3. There is something very impressive in the way in which all four Evangelists begin their gospels with the mention of John the Baptist, recognising in him the fulfilment of the final prophecies of the Old Testament. It is certain that the Old Testament can only be understood with constant reference to Christ.

4. Literally, ‘repentance leading to remission of sins.’ (1.) The remission or putting away of sins is not the same as simply a recovery of good conduct. It is the re-establishing of a right relation to God. God is wrathful against unrepented sin (Rom. ii. 5, 8, 9; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8; Matt. xxv. 41), and of course against the sinner if he identifies himself with his sin and clings to it. The remission of sins, then, means first the putting away of this wrath, and on the part of the sinner the losing of

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

Ver. 5. **All** twice (the marginal reading and the A.V. give it three times), showing how completely the work of rousing the people was done. The **desert** would be a rough and inhospitable country some distance from Jerusalem, near the Jordan, where there was nothing to attract the people but the sincerity of the new preaching. Read Luke iii. 10-18. (Jer. xxxi. 9.)

the mysterious sense of guilt. This is the work of Christ as the 'Propitiation for us.' (2.) But remission is closely connected with renewal of holiness and union with God (Jer. xxxi. 34, and study Mark ii. 5-12). The two things go together, though they are not the same. (3.) The repentance which leads to this is not remorse. The latter means a sense of degradation or loss brought about by our own fault: a selfish feeling. The former is a consciousness of having outraged the love of a Father, coupled with a deep desire to be restored (Ps. li. 4; Luke xv. 18). John did not preach forgiveness, since Christ alone could bestow that (ii. 10), and hence we see that the ceremony of baptism was only an external rite designed to teach vividly the need of purification. It had no power to confer a cleans-

ing any more than any other ceremony under the Law (cf. ver. 8). In short, 'baptism of repentance,' not 'baptism of remission.' Lastly, his teaching, like that of the Law of Moses, was meant to stimulate among the Jews a feeling that they needed a Saviour. Grace is not given to those who do not long for it (ii. 17; vi. 5; Matt. vii. 8). Thus we can understand how unwelcome this teaching must have been to the Pharisees (Luke v. 32; vii. 30).

5. John's dress and habits of life reminded the people of Elijah (2 Kings i. 8). His austerity was certainly one explanation of his extraordinary influence, but it was not put on for show. His example has been frequently imitated in the history of the Church, though at the present day it is not in favour.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 6. John's dress. Imitated by false prophets in old days (Zech. xiii. 4). Locusts (Lev. xi. 22).

Ver. 7. From St. Luke we learn that these words were in answer to the musing of the people as to who John was. The unloosing of the shoes and carrying them was the office of slaves attending on their masters at the bath (Ps. lx. 8).

Ver. 8. **With** or **in**.—The preposition *ἐν* is often translated 'with' or 'by' in the New Testament with a meaning coloured by the ordinary meaning 'in' (Rom. v. 9; iii. 25; i. 10; i. 4; 1 Cor. viii. 11; Gal. iii. 5, 11; Eph. v. 19).

7. The first intimation of the wonderful lowliness of the Baptist. He was of high position among his countrymen, the son of one of the heads of the courses of priests; and this utterance shows how distinctly he realised that Christ was more than merely human (John iii. 30).

8. With water only; but Christ with water and the

Holy Spirit accompanying water. Taken in conjunction with xvi. 16; Acts ii. 41; x. 47, this verse can only be interpreted as referring to the rite of Christian baptism, whereby the Holy Spirit incorporates us into Christ's Church, making us 'members of His Body,' and inheritors of everlasting life.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him :

11 And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Ver. 9. Shows that Jesus had been living at Nazareth till He was thirty years of age (Luke xiii. 23).

Ver. 10. **He saw**, *i.e.* Jesus. But John saw the Spirit also (John i. 32, 33). Not so the bystanders (John xiv. 7). The dove symbolises meekness (Matt. x. 16 ; Isa. lxi. 1).

Ver. 11. **Thou art**.—So St. Luke. St. Matthew, ‘This is My beloved Son.’

9. Why was the sinless Son of Man baptized? The following answers may be given. (a) To fulfil all righteousness, *i.e.*, to give an example of perfect obedience to God’s will as revealed. (b) To associate Himself with sinful men in making a full confession of the sinfulness of fallen humanity. This confession of the sinfulness of sin had never before been made by any one, and it was an essential part of the reconciliation (or atonement) wrought for us by Christ. Such an admission of fault is a condition of any true forgiveness being granted even among

men. Thus the Baptism was the beginning of the work of the Atonement. (c) To sanctify water for the purposes of baptism.

10. Many have seen a connexion between Christ’s ascending out of the water, and the Ascension into heaven, accompanied by the descent of the Holy Ghost (John xvi. 7).

11. The words spoken strikingly recall Gen. xxii. 2, *λαβὲ τὸν υἱόν σου τὸν ἀγάπητον*. The Voice was given for our sakes (John xii. 30). The three occasions on which the Voice sounded from heaven, (1) the Baptism, (2) the Transfigura-

12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

Ver. 13. **With the wild beasts.**—Added by St. Mark alone.

tion, (3) the colloquy with the Greeks in the Temple just before the Passion, should be compared: at the beginning, middle, and end of the ministry. (1) exhibits the regeneration of souls; (2) of bodies; (3) preliminary to the work whereby both are consummated. (1) and (2) foreshadow the Ascension; (3) explains the inner moral principle of an ascended life. (John xii. 25; Rom. vi. 3; as an illustration of St. Paul's expression, cf. St. Stephen's death, Acts vii. 56.)

12. If the lessons of our Lord's temptation, as recorded by St. Matthew and St. Luke, were fully drawn out, they would embrace all the principles of Christian conduct. We can only here observe (*a*) that Christ was as to His human nature liable to temptation (Acts ix. 16; Heb. ii. 2, 9; iv. 15). One object, certainly, was to triumph over the most terrible trials, in that very nature of which we are partakers, and in which our

Lord still makes intercession for us. Otherwise, the episode has no meaning for us, but it is explained by John xvi. 33; Rom. vii. 34; Matt. xxviii. 20. It contains the assurance of our triumph so long as we remain united to Christ (John xv. 5; Phil. iv. 3). (*b*) The temptations were meant to undermine the absolute submission of Christ's human will to the Father's. They suggested how the redemption might be accomplished by an easier way than had been prescribed (viii. 33, note). (*c*) The Lord conquered by meekness (Matt. v. 5), and not till a doubt was suggested as to the method of man's redemption, did He speak with majestic command. For the combination of royalty and meekness, Zech. ix. 9.

13. *With the wild beasts.*—These words remind us that the first Adam before his fall had dominion over the beasts of the field, and our Lord in His humiliation goes down to

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Ver. 14. **After that John was delivered up.**—Believe in. We have πιστεύειν εἰς, or ἐν.

Into Galilee.—But the temptation which has just been recorded took place in Galilee. This shows how little the Evangelist was aiming at completeness in his record. St. John's narrative tells us of the intervening ministry in Judea (ii. 13 to iv. 3), which explains St. Mark's hint.

Of the kingdom.—Omitted by the Revisers. Whether genuine or not, the words are accurate (cf. ver. 15 and Matt. iv. 23).

the beasts in the wilderness to overcome sin (Dan. iv. 32; Job v. 23). The brief expression hints at the dismal loneliness of the conflict. *Angels ministered unto him.* Not till the trial was over (Matt. iv. 11).

14. The fulfilment of the time. There are few more interesting subjects than that of the preparation in human history for the Gospel; especially in relation to the consolidation of the Roman power, the prevalence of peace, the facility of intercourse, the spread of the Greek language, with its unrivalled adaptability

to new ideas; the failure of pagan religions, the tyranny of sin (Rom. i.), and the thirst for spiritual nourishment. The words refer also to the time of the Law having elapsed; and in our Lord's mouth we may suppose they referred to deeper mysteries still (Rev. xiii. 8).

15. *The kingdom of God is at hand.*—This expression must have made all Christ's listeners alive with expectation. Every Jew was at this time brought up to look forward to a mighty deliverer of the nation from the Romans. 'The kingdom' was to be established amid

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea : for they were fishers.

Ver. 16. Not the first call. Compare carefully John i. 35-45. Nor the last (Mark iii. 14).

conquest and general rejoicing, and usher in a time of golden prosperity. We know this from the contemporary prophecies of Enoch ; the Psalter of Solomon ; the Assumption of Moses ; the Sibyllines ; the Book of Jubilees. There was a profound and intense antagonism between these ideas and Christ's teaching. Kingdom implies a king, subjects, and officials in due subordination. So the narrative leads naturally on to the calling of the Apostles.

Repent ye. Christ, the Baptist, St. Peter (Acts ii.), and St. Paul (Acts xxvi. 20), begin by preaching repentance. *Believe the gospel.* This exhortation shows that 'belief' is to some extent a matter of moral effort, which can be made or not made as the individual chooses. It is not meant to come by nature, but by man co-operating with God's grace. Such were the subjects of our Lord's first preaching. He is portrayed by St. Mark under the aspect of a Prophet, which means Teacher. The scene of this preaching was Galilee, where the most vigorous and

independent and less bigoted of the Jews lived and laboured.

The feeling of the Galilæans towards Christ was throughout different from that of the residents in Jerusalem. It was kindled by national aspirations, and full of warmth (John vi. 15 ; but cf. ii. 24, 25). Apart from this, there were reasons against beginning in Samaria, since His mission was first to His countrymen (Matt. xv. 24) ; or in Peræa, since Herod was living there now, and our Lord abstained from all contact with him (Luke xxiii. 9) ; or in Jerusalem, since the hostility of the priests and Pharisees would have led to violence before the appointed time.

16. The previous intercourse between Jesus and the fishermen had prepared them for this summons to leave their ordinary work and follow Him. There was nothing abrupt or magical in the call. From chap. iii. we learn that there was a third stage of final selection to the Apostleship from a larger number of disciples. Their preparation for the ministry was not completed till the

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

Ver. 19. The mother of James and John is often mentioned as a follower of the Lord. Not so Zebedee; and it has been surmised from this that he was not a believer.

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double gift of the Holy Spirit (John xx. 22; Acts ii. 4). It is worth while reflecting on the things which these men had seen and heard since their first invitation (viz., the events recorded in John ii. and perhaps iii.)

The second stage in the selection of these Apostles being now completed, we may ask what was their special fitness for so sublime a work. They were apparently very ordinary men, narrow in their aspirations and in their intellectual horizon, unlearned, jealous of each other, very slow to take in new ideas (x. 28; viii. 15; ix. 34), timid (xiv. 50). But they possessed two qualities of the utmost importance: they

honoured and loved goodness when they saw it, or they could not have made this renunciation; and they were matter-of-fact men, and thereby fitted to become trustworthy witnesses of a fact, the Resurrection (Luke xxiv. 48; John xv. 27; Acts i. 8, 22; ii. 32; iii. 15). We shall see how patiently and tenderly Christ enlarged their minds, gave them confidence, and overcame their jealousies. In other ways they started with some advantages; *e.g.*, they were of a middle-class station of life, Galilæans, accustomed to unremunerative toil. But still the work these men accomplished remains one of the greatest miracles in all history.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 And they went into Capernaum: and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine:

Ver. 20. **Hired servants** seems to denote a well-to-do position in life.

Ver. 21. **Capernaum**.—Christ lived at the house of Peter, who lived with his brother Andrew and his mother-in-law. John and James also had a house in the town. The place was a great centre of traffic, with its custom-house, garrison, harbour, and synagogue. The port and streets were constantly thronged by Jews and mixed Gentiles, Romans, Greeks, Syrians, Phœnicians, Arabians. It was the border-town between the territories of Herod Antipas and Philip.

**Synagogue**.—This institution probably dates from the exile. Nearly every town or village had its meeting-house, for purposes of worship and hearing the Law and Prophets. The internal arrangements were like those of the Tabernacle. The Ark contained the sacred writings, and a veil hung before it. Near it were the ‘chief seats.’ The officers were (1) the Rabbi and perhaps a college of elders; (2) the chief reader; (3) the servant, a sort of deacon. The hours of prayer were the third, sixth, and ninth hours (Acts iii. 1; x. 3, 9). A feast was held at the end of the Sabbath. The officers exercised a sort of judicial function (John xii. 42; Matt. x. 17).

Ver. 22. **Scribe**.—Cf. Prov. xxv. 1 and Is. xxxiii. 18,

22. *As one having authority.* 22, 28, 34, and especially vii. —For examples see Matt. v. 22. But there can be no

for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do

showing the growth in importance of the scribes. After the return from the captivity their power increased enormously. The country had been terribly punished for disobedience to the law, and afterwards these men alone understood it and the vast mass of traditions built upon it. The whole country combined to do them honour and be guided by them in affairs of daily life.

Ver. 24. **To destroy us** (2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6).

measuring of the gulf which separated the teaching of Jesus from that of the scribes. Men and women hungering for truth and guidance had been forced to put up with profane and childish disputations, subtleties, quibbles, bad jokes, riddles, &c., from the scribes. Our Lord's style of teaching, though Hebraic in form, and in the prevalence of proverbial utterances, was like a voice from heaven in its freshness, depth, insight, directness, tenderness, hopefulness, and courage (John vii. 46).

23. We must imagine the synagogue packed with a breathlessly attentive audience, when the cry as of a maniac rang through the building. *Unclean spirit.* The expres-

sion points to a deep mystery. There is a marked difference in the symptoms of possession and those of lunacy: especially as regards the double personality; the plural number; the instant recognition of the Saviour; the horror of ejection (Luke viii. 31). The victims of possession were conscious of their bondage and of the disorder in the depths of their being. It is probable that sin—especially sins of the flesh—laid open the individual to the assaults of the evil one, which may have owed their severity to the fact that the overthrow of Satan's kingdom was near at hand (Luke x. 18; Rev. xx. 2). The phenomenon ceases to be noticed at an early period after Christ.

24. If the possession by evil

with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

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Ver. 25. *φωβήθητι* : Matt. xxii. 12, and literally 1 Cor. ix. 9.

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spirit meant nothing more than ordinary lunacy, this recognition would be inexplicable: it is hard to account for anyhow.

(a) The cry of abject fear seeking to avert a doom; (b) meant to injure Christ in the estimation of the bystanders (cf. iii. 22 following iii. 11, and viii. 33 following viii. 29); (c) the spirits wished to impart to others the knowledge which was to themselves a torment, because (1) there is no such pain to the utterly depraved as the contact with goodness; (2) it brought close to them the final doom (Rev. xx. 10); (d) an attempt to mar the gradualness of God's revelation by blurting out the truth before men were prepared to receive it (Matt. vii. 6). It was from love that our Lord withheld it, even as He spoke in parables (1 Cor. ii. 8). To utter truth to those who are

sure to reject it, is to increase their hardness of heart. But this longsuffering has an end (xiv. 62).

25. Contrast Christ's majestic power with the magic exorcisms in vogue at this time. The Book of Tobit speaks of burning the heart and liver of a fish; the Book of Enoch of various plants being efficacious. So Josephus. Our Lord rebukes in His own name (Jude 9; Acts xvi. 18).

26. Having torn him—the final paroxysm (Luke ix. 42), just as evil habits sometimes seem most fixed shortly before they are overcome, and saints are often afflicted with mental anguish on their deathbeds (cf. the darkness on Calvary and Rev. xii. 12).

On the subject of miracles generally, it is worth observing, (1) that throughout Scripture each occasion of the giving of



27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

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Ver. 27. *ἐθαμβήθησαν*: A very strong word, meaning amazement mixed with awe; used three times by St. Mark (x. 24, 32), four times by St. Luke (iv. 36; v. 9; Acts iii. 10; ix. 6). It seems to denote a sense of the nearness of the unseen world. St. Mark is always prompt to notice these outward effects. R.V. = 'What thing is this? a new teaching' (Acts xiii. 12).

Ver. 29. Cf. John i. 44. There are several possible explanations of the discrepancy.

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a new law, or the restoration of the original law, is preceded by a manifestation of the Creator's power over His own natural law: to attest the authority of the law-giver (Gen. i. 1 and ii. 17; vii. 12 and ix. 3; xxi. 1 and xxii. 15; Exod. vii. 3 and xii. 3; xvii. 5 and xxii. 1; 1 Kings xvii. 6 and xviii. 37). Moreover, the signs correspond to the meaning of the new law. Hence our Lord's miracles show the nature of His work—the restoration of sick human nature

to health, its elevation to a higher plane of life than that at which it had been created. (2) There is no need to think of miracles as violations of nature's laws. They may be interruptions similar to those a man makes when he drains a river or disturbs an ant's nest. With higher knowledge we should see there was no violation of law in these operations of the Creator, but a manipulation of natural laws such as is often accomplished by man.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

Ver. 30. *πενθερά*: St. Peter's wife, said to be named Concordia, and Perpetua. Perhaps accompanied him on his journeys (1 Cor. ix. 5). Suffered martyrdom before her husband, and was encouraged by him to meet her death.

Ver. 31. Not apparently by request; possibly because it was the Sabbath (Luke xiv. 3). *κρατήσας ἤγειρεν*; not by strength (Matt. viii. 15). Read St. Luke's account. His expression 'great fever' is a medical one, to denote the kind of fever. *ἀφῆκεν*, *let her go*. The fever is still more clearly personified as the work of an evil spirit in St. Luke's *ἐπιτίμησεν*. 'She ministered,' to show the completeness of the cure. (Cf. note on miracles (1) *sub fin.* p. 13.)

Ver. 32. **When the sun did set.**—Either because of the Sabbath, which was over at sunset, or for the sake of the cool evening. The first is the more probable.

31. *Took her by the hand.*—We must observe our Lord's method of healing, knowing that He might have wrought cures by word of mouth only (ii. 11; John xi. 43); why was there so often a personal contact? (cf. especially v. 29). There must have been a deep reason. 'Nam quia ipse Christus verbum est, etiam factum

verbi verbum nobis est.' Spiritual life is given to believers in Christ through His human nature (John vi. 54)—which He did not put off at the Ascension (Luke xxiv. 39; Acts vii. 55)—by the agency of the Holy Spirit (John xvi. 14). God acting through outward visible means is the essence of sacramental grace.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Ver. 34. Notice St. Matthew's and St. Luke's additions.

Ver. 35. Our Lord's praying mentioned before the Baptism, Transfiguration, Passion, and before the choosing of the Apostles. There is some reason to think this was before the Sermon on the Mount.

33. This striking scene must have recalled to some of the people Isa. lxi. 1. The purpose of all this healing was to strengthen the Apostles as well as the people. It was only partly successful (iv. 40; vi. 3; but cf. John vii. 31). And yet it seems clear that miracles were only intended as *evidence* in a very secondary sense. To any who believe in the Incarnation for other reasons they are a natural corollary of the fact of God being in the world as Man (John xiv. 11). By others, the whole of Christ's actions should be looked on as evidence of His divinity (John x. 37, 38).

34. St. Matthew notices the fulfilment of Isa. liii. 4 to be explained by the fact that as the only way for us to bear each others' burdens (Gal. vi. 2) is by lively sympathy or 'feeling with,' so in the case of the Divine Healer every mortal sorrow was a separate pang to His soul (John xi. 33, 35).

35. Mark the strong expressions. This is an example of earnest prayer after brilliant successes. For the importunity of prayer, cf. Luke xi. and xviii. As this is not mentioned in the other Evangelists, we may suppose it was noticed by St. Peter, in whose house Christ was staying.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All *men* seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

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Ver. 36. **They that were with Him.**—Probably Andrew, James, and John.

Ver. 40. Leprosy, *vide* Bible Dictionary. Perhaps not contagious (2 Kings viii. 5), but isolated among Jews as emblem of the living death of sin, incurable by man (Num. xii. 12; 2 Kings v. 7; Rev. xxi. 27).

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37. *Seek for thee.*—Either to be healed, or from mere curiosity to see miracles. But miracles are subsidiary to teaching (cf. note on p. 15). Our Lord's mission was to preach (i. 14, note).

38. *Came forth, i.e.,* from God (John xviii. 37; xvi. 28, 30).

40. An astonishing triumph

of faith recognising the divine power (Luke xxiii. 42, and for a contrast Mark ix. 22). Humility also and absence of dictation (cf. 2 Kings xix. 19). The different accounts agree in giving these exact words. The reward is complete and instantaneous.

41. *Moved:* shows an eye-witness. A human being 'full

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away ;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man : but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch

Ver. 43. *Ἐμβριμσάμενος*, a very strong word, 'charged with threats;' *ἐξέβαλεν*, sent him out to do what he was told.

Ver. 44. **For a testimony.**—To be joined with 'offer,' not with 'commanded.'

of leprosy' (Luke) is the most pitiable object on earth (Gen. i. 27); *touched* (cf. verse 31, note). The touch was a defilement (Lev. xiii. 44), but by it our Lord teaches : (1) that He was Lord of the Law (ii. 28); (2) that He could take on Him our sinful nature without defilement, as sunbeams fall on a dunghill and remain pure. To the clean all things are clean (Tit. i. 15).

44. The charge is very strict. Besides the reasons given in verse 26 (note): (1) it was certain that the publication would attract crowds and hinder

the quiet work of the Preacher; (2) grace is to be sought rather than offered; (3) the priests might through jealousy refuse the certificate.

*To the priest.*—Why not to a doctor? Because of the connexion between leprosy and sin. For the pronouncement of cleansing cf. John xx. 23; 2 Cor. ii. 6; v. 18.

*For a testimony.*—Compare Matt. x. 18; Luke xxi. 13; Phil. i. 28. This seems to refer to the unbelief of the priests (John ii. 18).

45. The man's disobedience apparently excusable, but it is

that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places; and they came to him from every quarter.

## CHAPTER II.

1 And again he entered into Capernaum after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto

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CHAP. II. Ver. 1. Capernaum, cf. Matt. xi. 23.

Ver. 4. The house was built round an open court. There seem to have been two storeys round the court, and a covered gallery in which Christ was probably standing; the court below crowded, and the vestibule. From the street an outside staircase led to the roof (Matt. xxiv. 17). The roof which was broken through was probably the light tile roof of the gallery, not the main roof of the house, which would have been too solid.

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|                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| just in such cases that obedience | (Gen. iii. 6; Num. xx. 11; xxii. |
| is worth something. Cases of      | 21; 1 Sam. xv. 9; Gal. ii. 12).  |
| disobedience for which many       | As was inevitable, the dis-      |
| arguments were to be urged        | obedience did harm.              |

him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

Ver. 5. Notice R.V., **are forgiven**.—A pronunciation, like the Absolution in our Morning and Evening Service, not a wish.

Ver. 6. This may have been a hostile deputation sent from Jerusalem to watch Him.

Ver. 7. *Βλασφημεῖ*, in classical writings, to speak evil of a person, or things of evil omen. In the Bible, to speak things derogatory to God's honour.

CHAP. II. 5. *Seeing their faith, i.e., of the bearers as well as of the sufferer, since they had faced many difficulties. Evidently the benefits of faith are not confined to the individual. Here a great deal depended on the bearers, as for a child much depends on parents. There is much that is vicarious in the natural and moral world. Faith contains two convictions, (1) of something wrong; (2) of the power of Christ to heal. All hindrance in spiritual growth is due to one or both being feeble. Where both are vigorous they*

act upon the ever present grace of God (v. 27; x. 52).

*Thy sins are forgiven.* — Clearly the sufferer was oppressed with a sense of guilt, either with good reason (Ps. xxxix. 12) or from the Jewish belief about all illness (John ix. 2, 34; Luke xiii. 2; Job *passim*). Christ exercised divine insight frequently (xiv. 18; John iv. 18; cf. ver. 6). The scribes were perfectly right from their point of view in calling this blasphemy (xiv. 64; Job xiv. 4), but see note on ver. 9.

8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts ?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee ; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk ?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy),

Ver. 9. Not **easier to do but to say**, *i.e.*, without being put to the proof. Of course the first : **but that ye may know . . .**

8. Forgiveness is impossible without discernment of the thoughts of the heart. Jesus showed that He did so discern, and, besides, manifests His power by an outward act for the sake of the onlookers (Matt. xi. 23 ; Luke xvi. 31 ; Isa. v. 4 ; John xii. 40).

9. Sin is a bondage (John xx. 23). The Jews thought only of its effects, and conceived of forgiveness only as remission of punishment. But God only forgives by restoring to holiness. The paralytic man, besides being repentant, was a visible proof of Satan's power, sickness being *generally* (John ix. 2) the outcome of sin ; so our Lord here teaches His

power of reversing Satan's work in the physical and spiritual world. And for this display of grace He was called a blasphemer.

10. *The Son of man*.—The expression used by our Lord in speaking of Himself as the Mediator.

*On earth*.—It is well to notice that the final judgment is given to Christ as Son of man or Mediator (Matt. xiii. 41 ; Luke xxi. 36 ; John v. 22 ; ix. 39) ; therefore while on earth He exercises this power ; not delegated, as in Matt. xviii. 18. In these words He assumes the prerogatives of divinity as completely as in John v. and x.



11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 And he went forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

Ver. 12. The crowd now let Him pass (Mark x. 48, 49). Notice the different words given by each Evangelist, reporting the various comments of the crowd.

Ver. 13. All the accounts place this event close after the cure of the paralytic.

Ver. 14. *Επὶ τὸ τελωνίον*, as collector of the customs and fishery dues, &c., near the lake (*τελώνης*). These inferior

12. If the man had been guided *solely* by logic and reason he would have lain still. 29; John x. 4; xv. 5; Col. ii. 20; iii. 9; 1 Cor. vi. 19).

14. Suppose England was conquered by the French, and near each important town custom-houses were kept by rapacious French officials who batted on ill-gotten gains; and that among them there was an Englishman in French uniform robbing his own countrymen under the protection of France; he would be

15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

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collectors very much hated (Matt. xviii. 17) and outcasts, because of their extortion, in spite of the Roman law alluded to in Luke xix. 8, and as showing loss of freedom (John viii. 33), especially in Galilee (Luke xx. 22). Collectors of customs more extortionate than collectors of the poll-tax. He farmed his department of taxation; gave a capital sum which left a fair margin for profit; he might be fair and lenient; his temptation was to be grasping and dishonest.

16. Pharisees. See note on iii. 6.

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detested, but probably less than Levi was by the proud Galilæans.

*Levi.* — St. Matthew alone uses the later name (1 Cor. xv. 9). The name was probably changed with the change of life. Cf. Peter, Paul, Thomas, &c. The significance of names is very prominent in Scripture.

*He arose and followed Him.* — There is no reason to think that this was unpremeditated; possibly there was a religious movement going on among this class (Luke vii. 29; iii. 12, 13).

Levi had had opportunities of hearing Christ (cf. ver. 5).

15. A large company, perhaps not invited as a farewell, nor merely to do honour to Christ, but to give Levi's associates a chance of making the same renunciation, according to the saving principle of turning warm feelings into practice (Ps. li. 13; Luke xxii. 32). This was a terrible shock to the Pharisees (Luke xviii. 12).

16. Imagine them expressing their misgivings to the dis-

17 When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is

Ver. 18. The only fast instituted by Moses was on the day of Atonement (Lev. xxiii. 27), though it was frequently practised at critical times (Josh. vii. 6; Joel ii. 16). But during the Captivity four more annual fasts added (2 Kings xxv. 25). The strictest Pharisees fasted twice in the week (Luke xviii. 12). **Disciples of John.** Men who looked on John as a founder of a sect and not a forerunner.

Ver. 19. Cf. John iii. 29, where the Baptist refers to a custom not practised in Galilee. **Children or sons of**

ciples, probably without hostility, as people discuss a rising politician. Their idea of respectability was to be exclusive (John vii. 49).

17. Christ explains He is not a social leader but a Physician. No one could understand His mission who did not feel the deep corruption of human nature. So *righteous* is ironical (but cf. Luke xv. 7). There is also a

rebuke to them as guardians of the people (Ezek. xxxiv. 4). We see here the conflict between two ideals (John v. 44; Matt. xxvi. 35; Luke vii. 22).

19. Our Lord's attitude towards fasting frequently misunderstood. The Pharisees looked on it as a meritorious act, giving them a claim on God; and practised it to be seen of men (Matt. vi. 16). Here it is explained to be a

with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

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**the bride-chamber.** Those who made arrangements for the advent of the bride in the festive marriage week. A Galilaean custom.

Ver. 21. The two first Evangelists give the parable differently from the third. St. Luke emphasises the spoiling of the new garment only to produce a patchwork. Here the idea is of the contracting of the undressed piece after it has been sewn on to the old.

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natural outcome of godly sorrow (Eccles. iii. 14); connected with prayer and almsgiving (Matt. vi.). It is inseparable from genuine feeling concerning Christ's work, and has its effect in reminding us of spiritual things. We set great store by *expression* of feelings in ordinary life: why not in religion? For its other purpose, cf. 1 Cor. ix. 27. It is therefore an act of homage due to God, and also a means of discipline (Matt. xi. 12).

20. Certainly this was fulfilled in the days of the early Church.

21. Broadly, these verses express the impossibility of combining the life of mere subservience to minute rules with the glorious liberty of the children of God. Yet we can only be free by obedience. There is some obscurity in the parables, especially in the application of the figure as given by St. Luke. It cannot be right to explain the new cloth and the new wine by the austerities of John's disciples. The converse is the true explanation. The power of a real religious revival cannot be cramped by old forms and

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn-fields on the sabbath day; and his dis-

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Ver. 22. No man pours unfermented wine into old skins which are weak and brittle.

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rules: its vitality will be the ruin of both. Cf., for the severity of the figure to which the old dispensation is likened, Gal. iv. 3, 9; Heb. vii. 18; and for the great example of this very failure, Gal. iii. Observe that the word 'undressed' implies a different figure from that in St. Luke, where a piece from a new garment would not be 'undressed.'

22. For similar repetitions yet containing new ideas, cf. Matt. xiii. 31, 32, 33; Luke xiv. 28-30, 31, 32. This image is also connected with marriage festivities. The bursting of the old bottles seems to mean the destruction wrought by new truths working in minds unprepared for them; *e.g.*, as in some cases of religious excitement among the ignorant. It would apply also to an attempt to fit on a portion of Christian truth to old ideas. The figure

of the new wine is an anticipation of Acts ii. 13. Of course the difficulty of applying this principle, when novelties in religion make their appearance, is often very great. The 'new wine skins' seems to refer to the mystery of regeneration (Gal. vi. 15; Rev. xxi. 5). At the first sound of the new message, Paul, Nicodemus, and Caiaphas were alike hostile, and seemed likely to be ruined by it. Notice the kindly words with which St. Luke ends the parable, and compare throughout John ii. 1-11.

23. Luke vi. 1 describes the Sabbath as the 'second after the first,' probably the first Sabbath after the second Paschal day, on which the wave-omer of barley was presented. There is very little doubt that this incident took place between the second Passover and the second Pentecost of our

ciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never

Lord's ministry. (After the first Passover, occurred John iii. 22. The harvest was ripe on the return through Samaria (John iv. 35). Then the apostles seem to have scattered to their houses, Matt. iv. 18-22 being later. The active opposition to our Lord on the part of the Pharisees began with His visit to Jerusalem in the autumn of that year (John v.). So this incident belongs to the following spring.)

*To pluck the ears.*—Lawful (Deut. xxiii. 25) ; but the Rabbinic rulers made two unlawful actions out of this : the plucking, which they called reaping ; and the rubbing, which was grinding. Each involved a sin-offering. These and other rules were external, and often evaded. Thus, in order to move a sheaf from his field, which was forbidden, a man could lay a spoon on the top, and then the moving of the sheaf was excusable, as it was in order to move the spoon. Again, a Sabbath day's journey was 2000 cubits beyond one's dwelling ; but if at the

boundary of that journey a man placed, on Friday, food for two meals, he made that place his dwelling, and so might travel another 2000 cubits. There is a discussion in the Talmud whether, as a burden is defined as the weight of a dried fig, a man might carry two half figs at different times on the Sabbath. In one treatise twenty-four chapters are devoted to such childish questions ; and we cannot understand our Lord's attitude towards the Pharisees unless we remember that they were the slaves of these senseless rules, and tried to compel others to be so.

24. The Pharisees were watching probably to see if they went farther than 2000 cubits. It is supposed that the occurrence took place just after the synagogue service at 9 A.M.

25. Even the Rabbis allowed that danger to life superseded the Sabbath law, quoting Lev. xviii. 5. They also admitted some relaxation in the matter of Temple service, and hence would approve of David's

read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him ?

26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him ?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath :

28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

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Ver. 27. **And he said unto them.**—Formula for introducing a weighty saying (Luke v. 36).

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action as being in the service of the Lord.

26. In 1 Sam. xxi. the name of the priest is Ahimelech. Possibly he bore both names. *The shewbread.*—The most sacred of all food, laid out in the Presence of God, and only eaten by the priests, if ceremonially clean, in the Holy Place. Meat offered in sacrifice might be sold.

The instance was a cogent one, as David was acknowledged to be a national saint. But further, it was meant to help them to a deeper view of Christ's Person. Like David, the disciples were engaged in the service of One greater than the Temple.

27. Just as Christ modified but did not abolish fasting, changing it from a slavish cere-

mony into an act of worship consonant with man's need, so with the Sabbath. It remains an institution designed for God's glory and the good of man ; and man, being a complex creature, it is meant to aid him in many ways, but always with a view to God's glory. To say that one day's rest in seven is necessary for hard-working people is true, but does not exhaust the question, as worship is omitted.

28. If the ordinance is subordinate to man's need, the representative Man is Lord of the ordinance. If men were, like Him, perfect, the reason for the institution would disappear. It is, however, perfectly in keeping with man's requirements in a fallen world.

## CHAPTER III.

1 And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

CHAP. III. Ver. 1. Tradition says he was a stone-mason. Synagogue either at Capernaum or Sepphoris.

Ver. 2. Παρετηρόν = *malignantly observed*.

Ver. 3. "Εγείραι = *rise up and stand forth*: this, no doubt, to excite compassion.

Ver. 4. Refers to the Rabbinical precept that danger to life superseded the Sabbath law (but only where the life of an Israelite was concerned).

CHAP. III. 2. Apart from the particular meaning of the word, we should notice the light in which Scripture places those who merely watch as spectators God's work going forward (Judg. v. 23; Ps. xxxvii. 32; Jer. xx. 10; Matt. xxvii. 36).

The attack on Christ gets nearer, cf. vers. 6 and 16.

4. *To do evil, i.e., by omission* (Prov. xxiv. 11, 12; Matt. xxv. 45), *or to kill*. The refusing to aid life for malignant or childish reasons, is on the road to murder (Matt. v.



5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straight-

Ver. 5. *Συλλυπούμενος* = *feeling grief for them*.

Ver. 6. **Pharisees.**—As long ago as the Syrian war (150 B.C.) intestine strife began in Judæa between the Pharisees or Assidæans and the Sadducees or Asmonæans. The former abhorred all political alliances, and were zealous only for the law and the ecclesiastical traditions of the scribes. They rested their ideas of right and wrong on the observance of minute rules and childish maxims handed down by the Rabbis. The disputes between them and the Sadducees still continued (Acts xxiii. 7).

Herodians (viii. 15, xii. 13; Matt. xxii. 15; Luke xii. 1), probably the party which supported the rule of the foreigner Herod as a bulwark against the Roman

22). There seems also a reference to their designs against Himself. Throughout Scripture great reverence is shown for life, as life (Exod. xxi. 23; Lev. xvii. 11; Ps. lxxiii. 3). *Held their peace*, cf. Ps. xxxi. 18; 1 Pet. ii. 15; Matt. xxii. 12.

5. *Περιβλεψάμενος*.—Christ's look an anticipation of the Last Judgment (Ps. xiv. 2; Isa. v. 2; Luke xxii. 61). The combination of anger and grief for sinners hardly possible to man

(2 Kings v. 26; Eph. iv. 26). *Stretch forth*. Compare note on ii. 11. It should be noticed that this healing did not violate even the letter of the law, as it was only a spoken order.

6. A crusade against good is more powerful to cement antagonisms than one against evil. There are points of contact between all lies, none between a lie and the truth. Cf. Matt. and Luke for the fury of the Pharisees at this display of

way took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many; insomuch that

power, and a pledge of their own national existence. Their principles, which were the offspring of political distress, and short-lived, were thus a compromise between those of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Ver. 8. Ἀκούοντες, R.V., not ἀκούσαντες: as if they were discussing the miracles on the way.

Ver. 9. Προσκαρτέρη = *be always ready*.

divine power and compassion: and yet some of them must have been ordinary conscientious men.

7-10. The Evangelists, and especially St. Mark, record the growing popularity of the Lord in Galilee for about the first half of His ministry. It rested upon hopes of a triumph on this side of the grave; stimu-

lated by national feeling, by hope of material benefits, by curiosity to see miracles. These hopes arrested attention for His teaching, and prepared hearts for the work of the Apostles after Pentecost. But vague or carnal enthusiasm He always checked by stern and lofty doctrine (viii. 34; John vi. 66; Luke ix. 58).

they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12 And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

13 And he goeth up into a mountain and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

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Ver. 13. **The mountain.**—Thought to be the Horns of Hattin, from which the sermon had been preached, on the western shore of the lake. *Οὕς ἤθελεν αὐτός.* Notice emphasis.

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11. Cf. note on i. 25. It remains a mystery how the evil spirits at once recognised Him, and why the rebuke was apparently ineffectual.

13. The final selection of the twelve was preceded by prayer (Luke vi. 12). Hence our Ember Days. From this time on, our Lord devotes more and more of His teaching and attention to the training of the twelve. His work must not be considered as directed mainly to the multitude. He founded a small society on which every-

thing depended for propagation of the truth after His withdrawal from earth (i. 18, note). This propagation was at first the proclaiming the fact of the Resurrection; and the spread of the truth meant that outsiders joined the society (Acts i. to v.).

14. *Κηρύσσειν καὶ ἐκβάλλειν τὰ δαιμόνια*: to proclaim the Kingdom as heralds of the Most High, and to have power over Satan's hosts; first illustrated in vi. 7, then after Pentecost. *Ἐποίησε*, appointed, not ordained (John xx. 21).

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils :

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter ;

17 And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James ; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder :

Ver. 17. Three groups, (1.) Peter, James, John, Andrew. Though Andrew was the first to follow Christ, he was not among the most favoured circle. (2.) Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas. Some characteristics of Philip and Thomas are given by St. John. Bartholomew, in all probability, Nathanael Bar Tolmai (John i. 47 ; xxi. 2). 'Matthew' = *the gift of God*. Cf. Theodore, &c. (Compare Matt. x. 3 ; ix. 9 ; Mark ii. 14.) (3.) James, Thaddæus, Simon, Judas. James called 'the less,' but should be 'the little,' in reference to his stature. 'Thaddæus' = *Judas not Iscariot*, probably a name given after the original name had become odious. Also called 'Lebbæus' = *the lionlike*. Simon, the zealot member of the fiercest society of the nationalists (*vide* Bible Dict.). Judas Iscariot, or

16. It seems impossible to deny that a primacy of a kind was accorded by the rest of the Apostles to St. Peter, either because of his age or of his character (Matt. x. 2 ; xvii. 1 ; ix. 24 ; Mark xvi. 7 ; Acts i. 15 ; iv. 13 ; Gal. i. 18). In his best moments his faith was riper than that of the rest, and could find readier expression (Matt. xvi. 16 ; John vi. 68).

17. *Sons of thunder*.—Signs of the warmth of temperament

which led to this name (Luke ix. 54 ; 1 John ii. 22 ; iii. 8, and contrast 2 John vi.). The work of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost on these different characters (compare Peter and Philip, Thomas and John) was a guarantee of the all-embracing scope of the Church.

The appointment of the twelve an epoch in Christ's work. The ministry of the future Church was now selected, was being trained, and was to

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

22 And the scribes which came down from

'of Kerioth,' a little village in the south; a member of the tribe of Judah; the only one of the twelve not a Galilæan.

Ver. 21. Οἱ παρ αὐτοῦ. Friends, and probably brothers, among whom would be James, the future Bishop of Jerusalem. Ἐξέστη = *he is carried away by success*, his head is being turned by fanaticism, so that he is hardly responsible for what he does.

Ver. 22. Probably a special deputation sent down to undermine the work going on. Βεελεζεβούλ. Possibly a

be inspired by Christ alone (οὐς ἦθελεν αὐτός) before the future Church had begun to exist.

20. Such disregard of bodily needs at times necessary (John iv. 34, but 1 Tim. v. 23).

21. It is characteristic that ignoring bodily desires is taken as a proof of something like loss of reason. *His friends* (cf. on vi. 4). The episode is  
S. T.

wonderfully natural. Observe as to the true position of our Saviour in the midst of all the hollow popularity, the verdict first of his nearest relations, then of the scribes.

22. Thus a miracle to be effectual as evidence requires fair construction. The fact is not sufficient (John xi. 47; Deut. iv. 33; xxxiii. 29).

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Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be

Phœnician god: word of doubtful meaning: here, anyhow, used to mean the lord of the evil spirits.

Ver. 23. **In parables** = 'using a figure' (cf. on iv. 2).

Ver. 28. **Blasphemies**, ii. 7, note.

24. The answer intended to show that their cavil contradicted common sense. It also reveals the *kingdom* of evil: assumes the most complete singleness of purpose in the Prince of Darkness.

27. The only possible theory which harmonises with known facts. 'Strong man' (cf. Isa. xlix. 25; 1 Pet. v. 8).  $\delta\eta\kappa\eta$  =

*shall have bound*. When? Probably Matt. iv. 11 (cf. Luke x. 18).

28. Deep and difficult sayings. Two points first: (1.) Blasphemies mean something spoken. (2.) The reason of the first sin being pardoned is that it was done through weakness or ignorance. The second, then (ver. 29), must be a wil-

forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme :

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation ;

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

31 There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him ; and they

Ver. 29. *Αἰώνιον*, not 'everlasting,' so much as referring to a condition of things when time shall be no more (Rev. x. 6). *Ἀμαρτήματος*, the right reading, the easier *κρίσεως* having been substituted for it.

Ver. 31. **His brethren.**—James and Joses, Judah and Simon, probably half-brothers, sons of Joseph by a former wife : Joseph himself, as is supposed, being now dead (John xix. 26).

Ver. 32. Again note the different words used by members

ful traducing what is secretly known to be good, not only in thought but open speech, so that others may be misled. This is diabolic (*διαβάλλω*) (cf. Jas. ii. 19 ; Mark xii. 7), and if persisted in ends in 'eternal sin.' A warning as to the certain issue of the temper of scribes in thus describing the work of Christ done through the Spirit (Acts i. 2 ; ii. 22 ; Matt. xii. 28).

30. Explains the connection of the warning with this parti-

cular saying. Inferences : (1.) The vast scope of God's mercy in pardoning (Luke xii. 10). (2.) Matt. xii. 32. That for some sins there may be pardon after death (1 Cor. v. 5 ; xi. 30, 32 ; 1 Tim. i. 20). But against this mark the expression eternal *sin*, seeming to show that it is possible for the will never to turn (Rev. xxii. 11). See note on ix. 44.

32. The motive of His relations should not be assumed

said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren ?

34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren !

35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

## CHAPTER IV.

1 And he began again to teach by the sea side : and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea ; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

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of the crowd, in the different accounts. Cf. Homer's ὁδὲ δὲ τις εἶπεσκεν.

CHAP. IV. Ver. 1. It is supposed that the scene was on the northern shores of the lake, not far from Bethsaida, and in sight there is a corn-field answering in every particular to the one here described.

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It may have been interference, but may also have been a wish to hear.

35. Not from contempt of relationships (John xi. 36), but to show that from some enunciation of the closest ties is required (Luke xi. 46), and that, for all, they should never stand in the way of a call (Luke

ix. 60). Mankind here divided into two classes (Matt. xii. 30), all others being insignificant.

*Shall do the will, i.e., as the result of spiritual conformity (Rom. xii. 2). The new close spiritual relationships given in compensation for the loss of the old (Matt. xix. 29).*



2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken ; Behold, there went out a sower to sow :

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth ; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth :

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Ver. 3. **Hearken ; Behold.**—Possibly implies that a sower was in sight. The time of year is uncertain. Parabolic teaching common among the Rabbis, but confined to the select few. The subject of this suggested by the sight of the audience.

Ver. 5. **Stony**, *i.e.*, of shallow earth on a rock.

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CHAP. IV. 2 and 10. Why does Christ's teaching change its form at this point ? The reason is a merciful one. It was both to attract the hearers, and to temper the truth to their dulness. For the dumbest parables were something to start from, for others they were replete with truth. The time had come for the veiling of truth still more than before. Clearly, the subject is connected with the mystery of man's power of resisting the divine appeal. All the miracles and the teaching hitherto had effected little that was solid or permanent even in Galilee.

This was a deepening of the humiliation of Christ in becoming Man ; a further acceptance of limitation upon infinite power (Phil. ii. 8 ; Luke xiii. 34 ; but xvii. 24).

Concerning Christ's teachings from nature we notice : (1) That, unlike all poets, He never dwells on the terrifying side ; (2) that the lavishness of His illustrations shows how abundantly nature can help to a knowledge of God as a starting - point (Job xxxix. to xli. ; Rom. i. 20 ; Acts xiv. 17 ; xvii. 27) ; (3) the illustrations are taken with the

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched ; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns ; and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased ; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God ;

Ver. 6. **It sprang up**, as the energy of the growth downwards was checked. **Root**, which would have sucked up moisture to feed the stalk with.

Ver. 9. A warning that there was a meaning likely to be hidden.

Ver. 10. A select number of disciples as well as the apostles.

Ver. 11. Notice the R.V. omits **to know**. **Mystery**, a thing kept secret from our full understanding, but subse-

greatest ease and freedom from the commonest objects that meet the eye.

The parable of the sower is the first that He uttered ; but,

unlike the first productions of authors and poets, it is as perfect as the last.

11. *The mystery is given, i.e., to contemplate and act*

but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables :

12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive ; and hearing they may hear, and not understand ; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

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quently revealed, such as (a.) the Atonement, which is revealed and partly understood now ; (b.) the Trinity, of which the fact only is revealed now (a. Rom. xvi. 25 ; b. Eph. v. 32).

Ver. 12. Important to notice, *ὅτι*, 'that,' varies between final and consecutive in Hellenistic Greek, *i.e.*, 'in order that,' or, 'so that it happens.' Here mainly the former ; but in St. Matt. *ὅτι*.

upon, not to solve. *All things are done in parables*, a thought common to Plato. Men with thoughts intent on mundane matters can never learn from the parables of nature and life. Sights and occurrences are to them merely incidents without meaning—a story without an interpretation. Thus they live among phantoms (Rev. xx. 3 ; Col. iii. 5 ; Isa. lv. 2). *Τὰ πάντα*, nature and life ; *γίverai*, go on in a succession.

12. *That seeing they may see*. Quoted also in a more terrible form in John xii. 40. Our Lord's teaching had attracted large crowds of listeners, but He knew how hollow their allegiance was. The time had

come for some serious effort on their part to see below the surface and get at the meaning of His work ; but they only 'saw' without 'perceiving.' The passage from Isa. vi. 9, 10 represents this as God's doing by the agency of His prophet, and should be studied with Rom. ix. The difficulty is much modified if we remember that after a certain time of free rejection of God's message, the only thing left is that the disobedient nation or individual should be used as an implement for the furtherance of God's scheme, as the hardening of the Jews led to the calling of the Gentiles (Rom. ix. 22, 23). We

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

Ver. 13. Implies that this parable is very simple.

Ver. 14. The answer to the question lies in the moral condition of Christ's hearers. They had reached the time when self-examination and thought was necessary. Thus our Lord shows (1) He was under no illusion about the appearance of success; (2) how much reality there was in the people's attentiveness; (3) dangers in store for their spiritual life (John ii. 25).

can see that such dealing would be not only the wisest but the most merciful.

13. Meaning, 'arrive at perfect knowledge' (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

15. Some hear but do not mind: some mind but do not keep: some keep but do not bring to profit: some do all. The applications are numerous and simple. Individual (John vi. 66; ix. 24); national (Gal. iv. 14); or ecclesiastical (John v. 35; Rev. iii. 1, 10, 17).

Christ likens Himself to a

sower, and so teaches that His work in the world is and will be gradual, partial, and in conformity to natural laws. Observe next that no one of the four classes is meant to be absolutely hard: 'the trodden path is not a rock.' For an example of this, cf. Eph. ii. 3 with Luke xii. 13 (John vi. 27).

16. But the soil can often be changed (Ezek. vi. 26; Ps. lxxxviii. 10; Acts xxvi. 8; John xiv. 12)

Those who have joy in reli-

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

Ver. 17. Σκανδαλίζονται, are offended as at an unexpected affront.

Ver. 19. Μέριμναι, *anxieties* (Matt. vi. 25): that which draws asunder. **Choke**, because they grow faster.

gion without thought: emotional, borrowed enthusiasm (Luke ix. 57; Matt. viii. 19).

17. The double-minded (James i. 8), caring for other things (enumerated by the three evangelists) as much as for the new faith. No one is without these 'roots of bitterness;' but men differ enormously in their dealing with them (Luke ix. 61, 62; Acts xii. 25; xiii. 13; xv. 37; Josh. xxiv.

19; Heb. x. 34). Contrast Matt. xiii. 44.

19. *The deceitfulness of riches*.—Because they conceal from a man his true position (Luke xii. 20; xviii. 24; xi. 41).

20. The heart is good through receiving of the word, not *vice versa*; but compare John viii. 41; xviii. 37; Acts xiii. 48. St. Luke, ver. 28, records the warnings against fatalism.

21 And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22 For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more be given.

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given:

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Ver. 21. ὁ λύχνος, 'the lamp' of the house, *vide* R.V.

Ver. 24. Proverb used differently elsewhere.

Ver. 25. ἔχει, not 'hoards,' nor simply 'has,' but = 'acquires.'

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21. Connexion. There is a reason for this temporary hiding of truth. *Ἐρχεται* seems to refer to John viii. 12. *Οὐχ ἵνα*, viz., if it is to fulfil the reason of its existence.

22. The first proverb suggests a second, with many applications (Matt. xiii. 33; 1 Cor. ii. 7; Luke ii. 35). Notice, the hiding is with a view to the future manifestation (John xii. 24). The application here is primarily to the receiving of spiritual truth; unless it is spread it dies. Not that a man must strive to show his good-

ness to others, but that if it is genuine it cannot be concealed.

24. *What ye hear* = 'how ye learn divine truth,' or 'see what it is that ye hear.' According as ye are receptive so shall your knowledge be increased; but in increasing ratio.

25. The principle of inequality. The rewards are those of greater opportunities (Matt. xxv. 21; Luke xvi. 12; Ps. xcvi. 11). The rewards of obedience come little by little; those of disobedience at once,

and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground,

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not now.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

Ver. 26. Parable peculiar to St. Mark, teeming full of meaning. Principal thought: the growth in grace like the growth in nature.

Ver. 27. Parallel not strictly observed here.

and slowly die away. A very profound saying, easy to misunderstand.

26. It is an epoch in any one's life when he first becomes aware of mysteries in nature. Christ draws attention to the mystery of reproduction, and its likeness to the growth of grace, especially in gradualness. A few exceptions in both worlds (*e.g.*, volcanoes, Acts ix.), cf. Eccles. xi. 5, 6. Imagine St. Peter recording these words and thinking of his own growth (1 Pet. i. 23).

27. Cf. ver. 38; Ps. x. 11.

All religious people feel this difficulty.

28. *Of herself*.—Man's share is only glanced at (1 Cor. iii. 6). Notice also the lesson of patience (Jas. v. 7). The life of the Church (Isa. xi. 9; Ps. lxxv. 14).

29. Cf. Rev. xiv. 14; John iv. 35. In spiritual matters it is necessary to distinguish (*a*) Regeneration (Tit. iii. 5), the completed divine operation at baptism; (*b*) Sanctification (2 Thess. ii. 13), the gradual work of the Spirit—(*a*) may be invisible for long, or come to

30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 *It is* like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*.

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

Ver. 30. As if choosing from numberless illustrations.

Ver. 31. Proverbial for smallness. It is said to have sometimes grown to above a man's height. Noted also for pungency, medicinal properties, and required bruising.

nought (John xv. 6; 1 Thess. v. 19); (c) Conversion (Acts xv. 3), a turning from sin to truth; before or after baptism sudden or gradual.

31. Unlike all other founders of communities, Christ often foretells failure (Matt. vii. 22; xxiv. 12; Luke xviii. 8). This parable to balance the teaching of the sower and the tares.

So consecutive miracles often teach first one truth, then its qualification. Why not seed of cedar? The emphasis is on the *smallness* of the beginning. Consider what the Church was on the morning of Pentecost, and after (Ezek. xvii. 22; Ps. lxxx. 8). The stage of being able to give spiritual help to others is a very late one.



35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship: and there were also with him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

Ver. 35. 'Ως ἤν, cf. John iv. 6, and *ut erat* in Latin poetry.

Ver. 37. Sudden storms common on this and other lakes.

Ver. 38. **Master, Master**, in St. Luke. **Carest thou not**, peculiar to St. Mark; probably spoken by Peter.

35. See note on i. 25. Miracles hitherto had taught the Apostles their Master's power. This one also teaches them their weakness, even on their familiar lake. The training very gradual. Nothing had yet been said as to who He was.

36. Human weakness of Christ no hindrance to His divine power.

38. The words singularly characteristic of St. Peter. They betray some faith. The fault was not in appealing to

Jesus, but in being alarmed (Ps. liii. 5; 2 Tim. i. 7).

The miracle full of symbolism. *The ship* = 'the Church.' The apparent indifference of our Lord to His followers' trouble a means of discipline. *The sea* = 'the world,' yearning and restless (Isa. lvii. 20; Rev. xxi. 1, but xv. 2 possibly meaning the restlessness of life stilled, and purity and calm instead). In considering the effect on the Apostles, the ferocity of the storm must be remembered.

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

## CHAPTER V.

1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

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Ver. 39. **Peace, be still**, lit. 'Be silent, be muzzled' (Luke iv. 39; Rom. viii. 20). Γαλήνη γελάω, cf. 'leni resonant plangore cachinni,' a bright sunny calm.

CHAP. V. Ver. 1. Place identified now Khersa. Gadara impossible. By this time it was nearly or quite night.

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CHAP. V. 1. A miracle in which we ought to beware of asking unanswerable questions. The relations between the Son of God and the evil spirits is one of mystery (i. 23, note), *e.g.*, Why did the demoniac come forth from the tombs? The last miracle to be contrasted.

2. *Unclean spirit*.—It seems clear that this sort of possession was the result of the foul indulgences in lust either of the race or of the individual (Rom. i.). Sensuality has worked more havoc than any other sin (St. Augustine speaks of 'inter omnia

3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

Ver. 3. **Tombs**, cf. Num. xix. 11. His strength (Acts xix. 16).

Ver. 7. **Son of the most high God**.—Nowhere else except Luke i. 32.

Christianorum certamina duriora praelia castitatis;' and Isidore, 'magis per carnis luxuriam genus humanum subditur diabolo quam per aliquod aliud.' So among moderns, Bishop Temple in 'Essays and Reviews'). Guilt of the individual not to be assumed (Luke ix. 42). Imagine scene: after peace, this horror. The maniac's cry; solitude; night.

3. Compare ancient and modern treatment of such cases.

Yet strict utilitarianism would approve neglect.

7. Said to be the formula of exorcism which the spirit would be familiar with.

What have I?—The complete opposition between work of destruction and that of saving: just as complete in affairs of ordinary life, but we cannot see it. *Torment*.—The approach of Christ like the calls to repentance addressed to one who is wholly depraved.

8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.

9 And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion; for we are many.

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there, nigh unto the mountains, a great herd of swine feeding.

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

Ver. 8. "Ελεγε = *He was on the point of saying.*

Ver. 9. **Legion.** He had probably gained a knowledge of the strength and number implied in the word.

Ver. 11. There is no certainty whether the owners were Jewish or Gentile.

9. *What is thy name?*—(a) To appeal to his better self. (b) For our benefit, to reveal the mightiness of the cure (viii. 5; ix. 21). Our Lord's method never hasty.

10. Rev. xx. 10; 1 Cor. vi. 3; Jude 6. Comp. St. Matthew's account. The yearning of the evil spirits for a human will to subjugate is like the desire of all bad men to find partners in guilt.

11. Full of mystery. Why should they not enter the swine without leave? And notice the form πέμψον . . . ἵνα . . .

Again, why were they so anxious to do this, though the respite was only for a few moments? Lastly, the concessions made to them remind us of the larger question (Acts xvii. 30; Rom. iii. 25). It should be noticed that these obvious difficulties tell against the theory of invention, while on such a subject they should not surprise us. Trench points out connection between *spureus* and *porcus*. It is, however, very probable that the demons wished to injure Christ (i. 25).

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

16 And they that saw *it*, told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

Ver. 13. Κρήμνον, at the present day a very steep slope straight to the water.

Ver. 15. Θεωροῦσι, 'gaze at.'

Ver. 16. Οἱ ἰδόντες, those in the ship with Him, and in the other ships.

13. (a) To punish owners, if Jewish; (b) to give ocular demonstration of the cure (Exod. xiv. 30); (c) to facilitate the exit, and prevent destruction of the man's life; (d) to test the moral condition of the natives: (b) and (c) most probable. But we speak without any sufficient data. For the only other miracle involving destruction, cf. xi. 13.

14. The drama changes to
S. 7.

the natives. At first fear only (Jud. vi. 23, &c.), then when they saw the facts (ver. 16) indignation at the loss of property. The divine work, no matter how visible or how beneficent, has a poor chance against the love of worldly goods. There was also the instinctive dislike of interference with the ordinary routine of life (Matt. ii. 3). The request granted at once (vi. 5).

17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him : and all *men* did marvel.

21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him : and he was nigh unto the sea.

Ver. 17. Cf. Job xxii. 17.

19. Refusal (cf. v. 3), based on (a) the man's moral needs, *e.g.*, that of acting on religious emotion, or of company after solitude ; (b) the wish to prepare the country-side for the teaching of the Apostles. A clue to our Lord's action always to be found in the spiritual or moral needs of mankind. Under certain circumstances it is right to make known personal spiritual experiences (Ps. li. 13 ; xxxiv. 11 ; Acts xxii.)

Ἐθαύμαζον. The first thing needful was to shake them out of their narrow view of life and its problems.

Indications of spiritual laws in this miracle. (1.) Horror of goodness among the lost (Luke xxiii. 30). (2.) Combination of cowardice and ferocity (John xviii. 6). (3.) Self-destroying instinct of evil (Ps. lvii. 7, &c., apparently not in the later psalms). (4.) The granting of the prayer of the evil (Ps. lxxviii. 29-31 ; Numb. xxii. 20 ; 2 Cor. xii. 8 ; Exod. x. 28).

21, *sqq.* Three miracles of raising from the dead recorded : seem typical. Compare the intervals of time after death.

22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

24 And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many

Ver. 22. Cf. St. Matthew. St. Mark's the more probable order of events. Ἀρχισυναγώγων, local authorities. Ἰάειρος = *he shall gladden*.

Ver. 23. Ἐσχάτως ἔχει, Latinism. Notice the broken clauses.

Ver. 25. Look out the story of St. Veronica. This woman probably once well-to-do. Remedies for this unclean disease barbarous and elaborate.

23. Every word expresses the utmost urgency.

24. *He went with him*.—Most important to notice Christ's dealing with this man. His faith was bold and insistent, but narrow, and bound by what he had seen (contrast Matt. viii. 10). Jesus instantly sees this, and breaks off what He was doing. All depends

on whether the faith would stand the trial.

25. Her trouble had begun at the same time as Jairus' daughter was born.

26. We get an insight into her state of mind. She had the first requisite of faith, a sense of something wrong; also a knowledge of the impotence of human remedies. Now she

physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment :

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up ; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes ?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me ?

Ver. 28. **Clothes.** Cf. Num. xv. 37-40 ; Matt. xxiii. 5.

Ver. 29. *Μάστιξ.* Cf. plague, *πλήγη*.

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shows a confidence in the power of Christ. But in this confidence there was something superstitious. She thought the exercise of the healing power was independent of Christ's will, so that a mere touch would be enough, and that she might then escape notice, being legally unclean. Notice how Jesus corrected this, keeping in mind the interests of Jairus, and our instruction.

30. Question not asked in

ignorance (Gen. iii. 9 ; iv. 9 ; 2 Kings v. 25).

31. Seems to be inserted to show the Apostles' total misunderstanding of God's operations (ix. 5), but also draws out two truths : (a) The woman's touch was different in kind from that of the rest, and actuated by a different kind of trust ; (b) healing and life proceed from His person ; just the truth necessary for Jairus to grasp fully (Col. ii. 9, *σωματικῶς*).



32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, *certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was

Ver. 34. Σεσωκε, broader word than ὑγιής. Not only in health but in soul she was saved.

Ver. 35. Σκύλλεις. *Vide* Lexicon.

33. She was in danger of losing the benefit of personal communion with the Saviour (Rom. x. 9).

34. Her idea of a miracle was physical, not spiritual. It looked on God as a power only, not as a Father. Christ has already insisted on confession and communion; now He tells her that her faith was essential. This is very different from legendary marvels of magic. We have the ingredients of a miracle distinctly shown; divine power constantly ready to act; faith

in the sufferer barely strong enough for the effort; and the means whereby the latter liberates the former (1 Cor. x. 16). This dialogue gives Jairus a chance of understanding the injunction in verse 36.

36. Jairus had borne the delay; but there was danger of his expressing his despair. Jesus speaks to prevent this. Feelings generally confirmed by being uttered.

*Fear not, only believe* (2 Tim. i. 7).—What was he to believe? That in Christ's Person resided a power to work the impos-

spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

Ver. 37. The first occasion of this selection. It recognises the principle of inequality: perhaps designed to prevent jealousy.

Ver. 38. Hired mourners (Jer. ix. 17). The same custom survives.

Ver. 39. **Sleepeth** (John xi. 11).

Ver. 40. They were afraid of losing their gain.

**Put them forth.**—Acts ix. 40.

sible. *Fear not* that it is all over. *Only.*—God asks no more of man. It is common to hear people say they are without faith; but this injunction is unqualified. We may not answer God with *non possum* (Exod. iv. 10; Jer. i. 6; Isa. i. 5).

39. Death not the end of life, but an incident in life (xii. 27). Contrast the words with the noise of the mourners. Note the absence of sensationalism in the accounts. The power over death apparently different in degree from any previously shown.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

## CHAPTER VI.

1 And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

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Ver. 41. Is taken as evidence that our Lord spoke in Aramaic.

Ver. 43. Man's part is left to man to perform.

CHAP. VI. Ver. 1. The first visit was that of Luke iv. 28.

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43. So in the restoration of the morally dead, awakening must be followed by feeding (Phil. ii. 12; Luke xi. 26).

In the last two miracles the truth of the Incarnation forcibly brought out. Christ is Man, since He takes the dead person by the hand; God, since He commands her to live and is obeyed. Life through

the Human Nature of Christ is part of the doctrine of the Mediation.

CHAP. VI. 1. About a year and a half since the former visit. They were then hostile. Now *His disciples follow Him*. This amount of prestige prevented hostility, but not hardness of heart.

2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many, hearing *him*, were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

Ver. 2. 'Ακούοντες, 'while listening.'

Ver. 3. Indicates that Joseph had died before.

'Εσκανδαλίζοντο, lit. 'were tripped up;' as of people on their way to something.

2. The people testify to the wisdom of Christ's utterances, and admit His miracles. But they resist the claim made upon them, by dwelling on externals. Yet these very externals only increase the marvel, instead of simplifying it. They refused to probe the matter honestly (1 Kings xviii. 21), intellectual sloth.

3. 'He says and does marvellous things; but we know His surroundings were commonplace: therefore we may

dismiss the matter.' Or perhaps 'whence?' implies something 'uncanny' about it (iii. 22). Any argument will do to resist the claim of religion. *Were offended*.—The humiliation of the Son of God: thirty years of secluded, ordinary village life, an obstacle to earthly instincts (John v. 43; vii. 27; Luke xxiii. 37).

4. All greatness has its petty aspects which small minds can see. Christ took upon Himself the littlenesses of life. There

5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 And he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits ;

8 And commanded them that they should take

Ver. 6. **And he went** (Matt. ix. 35).

Ver. 7. **By two and two**.—Not stated, but implied in Matthew and Luke.

Ver. 8. **Save a staff**.—Cf. Matt. x. 10 ; perhaps different instructions given to different pairs.

is no credit in seeing them. The thing to aim at is to see greatness though disguised. (Compare the saying about the hero and his valet and the comment.) The words seem to refer also to Hosea i. 10.

5. The omnipotent God *unable* to work (Gen. xix. 22 ; xxxii. 25 ; Ps. lxxxi. 13), bound by a spiritual law of which He is the embodiment. *Sick folk*, who were in earnest in seeking relief.

6. (Isa. lix. 16 ; Matt. viii. 10.) Christ as Man wonders at what is unnatural. Cf. the frequent question, Jer. xxvii. 13 ; Ezek. xviii. 31 ; xxxiii. 11.

7. Hitherto the Twelve had

been trained to a larger intellectual and spiritual grasp, and to a trust in Christ. Next comes the preparation for their practical work, showing a striking combination of spiritual insight and common sense.

*Began* seems to imply that this was the first of a series of missions. *By two and two*.—Observe how they were paired (Matt. x. 2, 3). The object was to avoid dangers of solitude, conceit, or depression. 'Authority,' *i.e.*, power combined with love (ver. 13), truth, and mercy (2 Tim. i. 7 ; Eph. iv. 15).

8. *I.e.*, to be in the world, not of it (John xvii. 15) ; as

nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in *their* purse:

9 But *be* shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Ver. 9. *Χιτῶνας*, garment next the skin. No mention of the *ἱμάτιον*, or outer robe.

Ver. 10. **From thence**.—From the city or village.

Ver. 11. **Shake off the dust** (Neh. v. 13; Acts xii. 31; xviii. 6).

far as possible saved from such entanglements as belong to ordinary life, hospitality, wish to improve position, bargaining, packing, &c. Above all, to be trained to rely on an unseen Lord (1 Tim. v. 18; Isa. xxxiii. 16). *Staff*, sign of pilgrimage; also see Gen. xxxii. 10. *No bread*, because people value what costs them something. *Sandals*, not shoes (Matt.), possibly because the latter were put off in the

Temple, to signify absorption in religious duty.

9. *Coats* (Luke iii. 11). Covetousness the temptation of ministers (Exod. xviii. 21; Jude 11; John xiii. 29). Dante, *Inferno*.

11. *I.e.*, shall show unfriendliness as well as obduracy. *Shake off*, as a sign or testimony to be appealed to on the judgment day (2 Cor. i. 14; Phil. ii. 16; iv. 1; 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20).

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

14 And king Herod heard *of him*; (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

15 Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

Ver. 13. **Oil** (Jas. v. 14). Ἐξέβαλλον, &c.; notice the tense, denoting 'from time to time.'

Ver. 14. **Herod**, *i.e.*, Antipas, son of Herod the Great (Matt. ii. 1), and Malthace, a Samaritan woman. Strictly he was tetrarch, not king.

Ver. 15. **It is Elijah** (Mal. iv. 5).

12. *Repent*, cf. i. 4, note.

13. *Oil*, 'a visible token of spiritual grace' (Calvin), used, not medicinally, but for instruction.

The brief account of this exercise of ministry emphasises (1) preparation of men's hearts; (2) power delegated; (3) the use of outward symbols of divine operations. Luke xxii. 35-38 shows that the commission was educational; the training of the few in the midst of rampant evil being our

Lord's method. He seems to have felt some uncertainty as to the result (Luke x. 21).

14. Herod's character is revealed in this chapter as weak, sensual, cruel, and superstitious (cf. also Luke xiii. 32). The effect of the Apostles' success was to spread Christ's fame. Different people formed theories each according to his own previous moral history. Notice Herod's emphasis in verse 16.

16 But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison, for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not.

Ver. 17. **Herodias**, daughter of Aristobulus, eldest son of Herod the Great: married her uncle Philip, son of Herod and Marianne: an incestuous union. She broke it off and married Antipas (incest and adultery). The latter put away his former wife, daughter of Aretas, an Arabian prince. If Philip was still alive, which is uncertain, Antipas and Herodias each committed incest and double adultery. Yet St. Mark deals with him as gently as was consistent with a full disclosure.

Ver. 18. John was imprisoned in the fortress called Machærus, to the east of the Dead Sea.

18. If the daughter of Philip and Herodias, Salome, had not been born, the marriage would have been lawful, as far as the relationship was concerned. Ἐλεγε, tense.

A great moral crisis in the Baptist's life. Compare the stages of his career; the long

preparation; the wide renown in the wilderness; the life at court; imprisonment; death. The most trying time probably at court, where everything prompted a discreet reticence. (Note carefully the drift of Luke vii. 19-35.)



20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee;

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste

Ver. 20. Notice the two readings, ἡπόρει and ἐπόλει. **Supper** in the fortress, just before the war with Aretas began, undertaken by the latter in consequence of the insult.

Ver. 22. Esther vii. 2.

20. *Herod feared John.*—The not uncommon phenomenon of a bad, weak man, hungering to hear denunciations of himself. The A. V. reading is tempting: he did much of what he was told, except the one renunciation (James ii. 10; Matt. v. 18).

25. *Straightway with haste.*

unto the king and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by, in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went, and beheaded him in the prison,

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 And the apostles gathered themselves to-

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Ver. 30. *I.e.*, the twelve after their mission.

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—Daughter and mother probably had plotted together.

28. Tradition adds that she tore the tongue out.

29. *Took up*.—Perhaps after being cast out. The whole narrative is a marvel of conciseness and lucidity. As to the end of the Baptist, it exemplifies the law of the antagonism between truth and the world, anticipating the supreme instance on Calvary. It is doubtful if any truth really needed for man has been welcomed at first. (Compare in

this connection St. Vincent of Lerins' canon, 'Quod semper, quod ubique quod ab omnibus.') Yet note the contrast between the beginning and end of the careers of great reformers in Scripture; frequently triumph, then shame.

It is worth while noticing that Christ did nothing to avert the death of the Baptist; nor does He comment upon it. He must have seen and heard a vast amount of sin and folly and said nothing.

gether unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a

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Ver. 31. Notice *αὐτοί*, you too, the givers, require rest.

Ver. 32. **Desert place.**—Not wilderness, but uninhabited, near Bethsaida Julias, N.E. corner of the lake. The spot has been identified.

Ver. 34. **Come forth.**—Probably from the ship.

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 31. Rest required after giving out. There is a striking absence of haste in divine operations (Acts vii. 29; Gal. i. 18; ii. 1; Luke iii. 23). *They had no leisure.*—This belies the impression gathered from pictures, &c., that the Apostles were merely spectators and listeners. They must have been constantly engaged (ver. 38, and 7, note; 1 Cor. iii. 9).

34. This is the only miracle

narrated by all four Evangelists. It is full of types as to God's bountiful dealing with His Church. The reader should fill up this narrative with the other three, especially with that of St. John. The fact that the miracle was at the time of the Passover, and was closely followed by that of the walking on the water, and that the two together lead to the great discourse in John vi. just

shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

Ver. 37. **Penny**, *δηνάριον* = 7½d. Possibly this 200 denarii was the total sum they possessed.

Ver. 38. **Fish**, small salt fish used for seasoning bread.

a year previously to the institution of the Lord's Supper, point to a development in Christ's teaching concerning (a) divine feeding; (b) divine Presence, leading to the doctrine of the Eucharist (John vi. 11).

Not . . . shepherd.—Cf. Ezek. xxxiv. 18.

35. Cf. St. John. Training in trust through despair of earthly resources (Deut. xxxii. 10, 11; Mark v. 26).

37. 2 Kings iv. 41, 42; Num. xi. 22.

38. Questions to draw out the faith of the Apostles as a necessary preliminary to the divine manifestation. There was but little, but it seems to have been combined with true self-denial, in offering to give up all their little store (ver. 31; Matt. xii. 1; Mark viii. 14; Matt. vi. 33).

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And they did all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

Ver. 39. **Green**, as it is for a few weeks in the spring (John vi. 4).

Ver. 40. *Πρασιαὶ πρασιάί*, like flower-beds: the effect of coloured garments on the grass. Perhaps they were in double files of fifty in each row.

Ver. 41. The Talmud says, 'He that enjoys aught without thanksgiving is as if he robbed God' (1 Sam. ix. 13; Matt. xxvi. 26).

Ver. 42. *Ἐχορτάσθησαν*, in body only, like cattle (John vi. 26). This is the predominant sense of the word.

Ver. 43. *Κοφίνων*, the small baskets carried by Jews

39. It is most important to observe the orderly nature of the distribution. It was quite superfluous, excepting as a preparation for the life of the Church.

41. The solemnity of our Lord's demeanour recorded by

S. 7.

all the Evangelists. For the teaching of sacramental truth we can scarcely conceive of a more effectual preparation than this.

42. The multiplication must have taken place in the Apostles' hands.

43. In this miracle we ob-

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44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

away from home (Juvenal, Satire, ii. 14; Mark viii. 8; Acts ix. 25).

Ver. 44. **Men** (Matt. xiv. 21). (a) Women and children kept apart according to Oriental ideas; (b) women not required (generally) to attend the feasts, hence only present in inconsiderable numbers, as this crowd was mainly of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

Ver. 45. Bethsaida Julias, near the extreme north of the lake.

serve—(1) royal bounty; (2) leisureliness; (3) order; (4) employment of human agents; (5) after their offer of self-sacrifice; (6) at a time of apparent destitution. Also the miracle had been prepared for by the people being detained by our Lord's teaching (ver. 34).

45. From St. John we learn that the people were anxious to make Christ a king; all that was carnal and selfish in their feeling for Him was finding expression, and likely to injure

the faith of the Apostles. It was very rarely that our Lord interfered in the course of events.

46. Compare the other occasions on which Christ is recorded as praying; Luke v. 12; ix. 29; xi. 1; xxii. 41—always before some momentous event. Here He seems to be preparing for the great discourse at Capernaum (John vi.), which was to elevate the ideas of the Apostles, sift His disciples, and lay the foundations of sacramental truth.

47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the

Ver. 48. The power of God over the sea often mentioned in Scripture, *e.g.*, Ps. lxxvii. 19; Job ix. 8, &c.

47. The first miracle taught the mystery of the divine feeding; the second that of the divine presence.

48. *He saw them.*—Again waiting till their need was extreme. *Would have passed.*—As in Luke xxiv. 28, to draw out an expression of reliance upon Himself.

49. Man is always ready to have recourse to superstition when natural laws cease to be a guide. We find it difficult to rise up to a simple belief in

God's power over matter. Possibly this was but a mighty extension of the mysterious subordination of matter to spirit often observable, *e.g.*, a man weighs less when awake than when asleep—the physical strength given by great excitement, &c.

50. *For they all saw Him.*—Peculiar to Mark: none able to rise above ordinary notions, not even John (xxi. 7).

51. The amazement is spoken of as a sign of unbelief; it was

ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

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due to their clinging to low ideas about the person of the Lord. If they were true, then the amazement was reasonable.

52. That is, the divine creative action upon matter (viii. 17; iii. 5; xvi. 14). The apparent discrepancy with Matt.

xiv. 33 to be explained by the insertion of the incident, Matt. xiv. 28-31; the statement here refers to the Apostles' feeling *before* Peter made his attempt, that in St. Matt. to the effect after.

56. Cf. v. 27, 28; Matt. ix. 20; Acts xix. 12.



## CHAPTER VII.

1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault.

3 (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except

CHAP. VII. Ver. 1. The first direct collision with Rabbinism, the official teaching added to the Mosaic Law, revered by many above the Law. The terrible punishment of the Captivity caused the Palestinian Jews (the minority) to dread idolatry but to idolise the law, meaning their own additions as well as Scripture; *i.e.*, the writings called the Mishnah, the Midrash Targums, &c., and finally the Talmud. Their theology was divided into Halachah and Haggadah, the former being the traditional law, and supposed by all to be in complete agreement with Scripture. This is exactly what Christ denies (ver. 13), thereby marking the completeness of the antagonism between Him and the Jewish leaders.

Pharisees, a religious party; scribes, the official interpreters of the law, held in very great honour. 'Coming,' as a deputation, to prove their allegation (John ix. 16).

Ver. 3. **All the Jews.**—Because this was one of the few points on which the two great rival teachers, Hillel

CHAP. VII. 2. Possibly a nance was broken. For the reflection on the miracle of the effect of miracles on different previous day, when the ordi- minds, cf. John xi. 47.

they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.)

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath

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and Shammai, just before the time of Christ, were agreed. These two were called 'elders;' hence the expression, 'the tradition of the elders.'

Oft, 'diligently.' Probably means 'to the wrist,' since if the water remained short of the wrists the hands were not clean. There was a belief that an evil spirit settled on the hands when they were defiled. The numerous formalities connected with this rite had been very recently confirmed by authority.

Ver. 4. **The market.**—Because of the contact with heathen, which sometimes compelled the orthodox Jew to immerse. Cups, &c., bought from heathen had to be put into boiling water or purged with fire. Anything with a hollow in it was a cup. The whole of this passage shows an intimate knowledge of these minutiae.

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6. We should avoid the common mistake of supposing that the sin denounced here is peculiarly Jewish. Wherever any religious observances co-exist with worldliness Isaiah's words apply. The peculiarity of the Jews was their zeal (cf. St.

Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

Paul's pathetic words, Rom. x. 2). However misguided, it was better than indifference (Rev. iii. 15).

8. Why? These traditions were burdensome enough (Matt. xxiii. 4); but they only required outward effort, not reformation of the heart. Men naturally resent any claim which involves the latter. (Compare Deut. iv. 2.)

9. Ironical. *Full well* means something like 'what could be better than.'

10. This is an instance of evasion by a formula. *Korban* = 'dedicated to the Temple treasury.' If true, the remark would mean that the money was previously dedicated; but the word was said to enable the son to withhold what his parent required, and enjoy it himself for a long time. Yet the Jews were punctilious about observing the law of Exod. xxi. 17. Human history is full of the power of phrases.

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother ;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered : and many such like things do ye.

14 And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*, and understand :

15 There is nothing from without a man that, entering into him, can defile him : but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And when he was entered into the house

13. *Tradition.* — Not of a superfluous food, but in the hallowed antiquity, from a disobedient will. Man has a purer age of the Church ; but a difficulty in thoroughly understanding the truth of his natural corruption, but blames a very late development, mostly between the times of the Old and New Testaments. Compare the growth of some circumstances (Gen. iii. 12 ; Romanist dogmas, confessedly not based on Scripture, nor Exod. xiv. 12 ; xxxii. 22 ; known to the early Church. 1 Sam. xv. 21).

14. With all impressiveness, 16. Touches on the mystery, since these words mark a complete revolution in religious which Scripture does not solve, thought. *Understand*, a moral that some are without understanding or faith (2 Thess. iii. 2). act, like love, in 1 John iii. 18. Comp. John xii. 40 with ix. It is well to distinguish the kind 41 and v. 44. Isaiah, chap. i., of teaching given to the multitude dwells on the stupidity towards spiritual truth shown by the nation.

15. Even temptations from 17. Notice the delusion which is here attacked, viz., that without need not defile. The unclean meats actually defiled the *heart* of man, as if the sin of gluttony is not in the they brought defilement with

from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him:

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders.

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit,

Ver. 17. **Parable**=‘dark saying’ (iv. 11).

Ver. 19. Notice the important correction at end of verse in R.V.

Ver. 21. **Evil thoughts**.—Perhaps ‘disputings,’ alluding to the cavils of the scribes (1 Tim. vi. 5).

Ver. 22. **Evil eye**=‘envy,’ ‘blasphemy,’ or R.V. ‘railing;’ probably the same sense as in 1 Cor. x. 30.

them, whereas the prohibition against certain foods was for purposes of exclusion from other nations. This saying is in anticipation of the breaking down of the wall of partition (Eph. ii. 14).

21. Evil thoughts are said to proceed out of the heart when they are taken up and pon-

dered on with the imagination and intellect. All these sins enumerated have their origin in corrupt desire.

22. **Pride**.—The haughty demeanour of a self-centred man. **Foolishness**.—The absence of what is sometimes called Christian wisdom.

The whole of this explana-

lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness :

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it* : but he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet :

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Malicious gossip proceeds from evil desire to injure another or to exalt oneself.

Ver. 24. Compare St. Matthew's account. It seems the woman first accosted Christ in the street, then followed Him into the house.

Ver. 25. (Matt. xv. 22.) Probably the unclean spirit caused paroxysms. Anyhow the calamity of such a possession of a pure young girl must have been unspeakable. **Fell at his feet.**—St. Mark here explains for Gentiles the Oriental mode of prostration in worship.

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tion of the working of evil must be taken in connexion with the obligation to treat the body with respect. Evil originates in the heart and displays itself in act ; but any violation of the laws of health will affect the mind and soul (Ps. cxxxix. 14).

24. Possibly owing to danger from the Herodians or others ; or very probably with the intention of working this parti-

cular miracle, which is full of instruction.

25. Possession by evil spirits was prevalent among the heathen. We do not read of one case in Judea. This woman was almost certainly a heathen by religion, but was able to recognise and adore love and power when she heard of it. Yet she belonged to the very refuse of heathenism.

26 The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

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Ver. 26. One of the old accursed race (Numb. xiii. 29; Gen. ix. 25) doomed to extirpation for foul wickedness.

Ver. 27. **Dogs.**—The term among the Greeks either denoted a noble animal or was a term of contempt; in Scripture, always the latter.

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27. The first repulse was given by silence (Matt. xv. 23). The second, see ver. 26. This is the third. The answer means, 'let the chosen people have the full abundance of God's favour.' It contained a sting in the allusion to the conquest of Canaan. This is divine love hiding under severity (Isa. lxxv. 15; Ps. xxii. 2; Mark vi. 48; Luke xxiv. 28, &c.). Thus also Christ speaks honourably of the Jews, but sharply to them (John viii. 23, 37; iv. 22), always to teach humility.

28. She first detects the gleam of light in the answer:

'If dogs, anyhow not debarred from the master's table.' The answer shows the intimate union of faith with humility. She accepts the description and its stigma, resting her appeal entirely on mercy (2 Kings xix. 14-19). For ordinary heathen prayer, cf. Homer's 'Iliad,' Bk. I. This woman exactly illustrates Rom. x. 30 (cf. 31). Her words are adopted 'in the deepest prayer of our Eucharistic service.' For other teaching of the need of importunity in prayer and intercession, cf. Luke xviii. 32; Gen. xxxii. 24; 1 Kings xviii. 43.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

Ver. 31. This visit was heralded (ver. 20).

Ver. 32. **They bring.**—Cf. ii. 3, note. **To lay his hands.**—Probably a sign of weak faith (2 Kings v. 11; Mark v. 23; vi. 5).

33. The reason is doubtful. All goes to show a weak faith in the people and in the sufferer. Christ perhaps wished to release him from the effects of the unbelief of the others, or to avoid encouraging superstition. The details show difficulty, though the Healer was omnipotent.

34. *Sighed.*—Cf. viii. 12.

*Looking up.*—This action, elsewhere noticed, illustrates the law that Christ, as Man, received from the Father gifts for men (John v. 30; xiv. 24; Eph. iv. 8). Clearly this is to enable us to learn the difficult lesson contained in 1 Cor. iv. 7; 1 Pet. iv. 10; John iv. 10; vi. 32. All Christ's actions are for our spiritual edification.



36 And he charged them that they should tell no man : but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it* ;

37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well : he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

### CHAPTER VIII.

1 In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and saith unto them,

2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat :

3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way : for divers of them came from far.

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CHAP. VIII. Ver. 1. Among many points of resemblance, an attentive reader can detect at least nine differences between this and the miracle of the five thousand.

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37. The words do not express a very elevated faith.

CHAP. VIII. 2. Christ takes the initiative, but not till three days had passed. There are many illustrations in Scripture of the saying, 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity' (v. 26 ;

xiii. 20 ; Luke xv. 19, 20, and frequently in Psalms and Prophets).

3. The question put to the Apostles to draw from them some reminiscence of the previous miracle ; but in vain. There are no limits to human

4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness?

5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them*; and they did set *them* before the people.

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Ver. 5. The proportion borne by the multitude to the loaves and fishes was greater in the first miracle. This is clearly against the theory of a forgery.

Ver. 6. As before, the giving of thanks is emphasised. There is also the blessing before the distribution of fish (ver. 7). It was in accordance with Jewish custom to give thanks only once at the beginning of the meal (vi. 41). But, dealing with Gentiles, our Lord repeated the thanksgiving. **Ground**, not grass (vi. 39), as in Palestine it would be burnt up in the summer.

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incredulity of divine power. Cf. Exod. xvii. 1-7; xvi. 13; Num. xi. 21, 22. The Apostles, moreover, were singularly matter-of-fact men (John xiv. 5, 8; xx. 25; xii. 5), and hence well fitted for their commission (Luke xxiv. 48). Every new collapse that impends seems worse than previous ones. To argue from God's mercies in the past to the future is a triumph of faith very rarely attained. Something always

seems different. Possibly the fact that these were heathen was the difficulty (Matt. xv. 23). Again, the miracles of feeding were very infrequent compared to those of healing. Why? For Christ's taking the Apostles into confidence, cf. Amos vii. 7; John xv. 15. Everything that occurs is made a means of increasing their faith in Him, or their power of resource.

7 And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them*.

8 So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

10 And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily

Ver. 11. **Came forth.**—Probably from the small towns in the neighbourhood. In Matt. xv. 39 Magadan is given as the name of the district, somewhere south of the Sea of Tiberias, within the Decapolis.

Ver. 12. **Generation.**—Sometimes used as = ‘men of a certain disposition, temper’ (Ps. xiv. 5).

11. The demand for signs in the case of great rabbis is mentioned in Jewish writings. Their view of Christ was that He was a law-breaker, and therefore a false prophet. It would settle the question if they demanded a sign and He failed to obtain one. Apparently they thought a sign in the sky was not open to the suspicion of iii. 22.

12. *Sighed deeply.*—Why? (1.) The request was a premonition of xv. 33, or of xiii. 24, 26. This was a fresh proof of the suicidal blindness of the Jews (Luke xiii. 34; xix. 41).

I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

13 And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

14 Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

Ver. 15. **Take heed, beware**, expressing urgency. **Of Herod**, Sadducees (cf. Matt.). **Leaven**, ordinarily a lump of old fermented dough put into fresh dough prepared for baking, causing it to swell. Unleavened bread was insipid. The aptness of the figure consists in the connexion between leaven and corruption and its gradual influence.

They did not know that faith cannot be grounded on sight (Heb. xi. 1; John xiv. 17; Rom. viii. 24; 2 Cor. iv. 18). Faith was a new quality, only understood by a very few (Luke ii. 38). The word almost confined to the New Testament (Deut. xxxii. 20; Hab. ii. 4). It is a reliance on revelation rather than on common sense, and demands a sympathy with the divine order of things. (2.) It was a repetition of the temptation (Matt. iv. 9), as it suggested a short cut to a transitory success. Those who are dismayed by

disappointment in their religious life are asking for a sign, which would cost nothing and do no good.

*This generation.* — Possibly because the sign of xiii. 24 was forty years later; but cf. xiii. 30.

14. So little did they 'take thought' about material needs in our Lord's company, yet the rebuke they are to receive is a very severe one.

15. Explains part of the Old Testament type (Lev. ii. 11; Numb. vi. 15; Deut. xvi. 4; Amos iv. 5, ironical; Deut. xvi. 3). Here leaven = the cor-

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it*, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

Ver. 16. Probably after an interval, and being reminded of the omission by the use of the word.

Ver. 17. **HARDENED**, cf. vi. 52.

rupting influence of the tone of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Different in many ways, in both parties were many hypocrites (Luke xii. 1), *i.e.*, professing zeal for a lofty object—religion or patriotism—but caring for their own glorification most (John v. 44; 1 Cor. v. 8; Matt. vi. 2). This secular motive, called ambition, is profoundly corrupting and stealthy in its influence. Hence the severity of Christ's denunciations (Luke xi. 39; Matt. vii. 22, 23; cf. ix. 11, 12), and St. Paul's (Rom. ix. 31; Gal. v. 12, &c.).

16. But the Apostles could not rise above the thought of barley loaves.

17. *Why reason?* cf. note on vii. 21. *Understand*, cf. Matt.

S. T.

xv. 16, where there is a reference to the Pharisees. Stupidity about spiritual things, when pushed beyond a certain point, is treated like want of principle (cf. for utter degradation, Rom. i. 21, and for the life of the blessed, 1 Cor. xiii. 12). It is in the list of vii. 22. But when thoroughly honest, and combined with love for Christ, it is removed by Him (John xx. 28). Here, the second cause of complaint, their being anxious about the want of food, is due to the same cause, absorption in temporal things.

Christ's teaching easy to misunderstand, but when explained by God's merciful severity, it not only opens mysteries, but allays anxiety also.

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19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had

Vers. 19, 20. As before, different words are used to denote different kinds of baskets.

Ver. 22. **Bethsaida**, *i.e.*, Julias, on the eastern shore of the lake. Therefore the denunciation of Matt. xi. 21 is not to be taken in connection with this miracle. Many points of similarity to the miracle of vii. 31. One striking difference.

23. The only miracle of which the healing was gradual. (Recovery of spiritual sight *always* gradual, even in Luke xxiii. 42, and Acts ix. 6.) (1.) Because the sufferer's faith was probably weak. (2.) To show us the process of spiritual healing. Notice, then, the faith of others (as often): need of solitude; healing from Christ's Person; the question asked

aloud for the benefit of the Apostles and of the sufferer; no proportion in His sight (as in the newly converted); need of quiet home-life for a time, not excitement or questioning (John ix. 25). Every action of our Lord's directed to training of the Apostles for their work. Again, we see here the law of gradual operation (iv. 28). The legendary miracles

spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought.

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.

25 After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up : and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell *it* to any in the town.

27 And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi : and by the way he

Ver. 24. Notice the broken sentence of the R.V.; more natural than the A.V.

Ver. 26. Shows that He lived in a house separated from the village.

Ver. 27. This was a part of the country hitherto unvisited by them, rich in splendid scenery and historical

are for the most part meaningless and without law.

Some retrospect is necessary. The age-long preparation (Matt. xxv. 34 ; Eph. i. 4 ; 1 Pet. i. 20) for man's salvation was now to be tested. *Christ was founding a society built upon belief in His Person.* Were the Apostles ready? The ministry in Galilee was ended (John vi., *sub fin.*) ; hostility was gathering all round ; He had refused the formal challenge of the Pharisees. Any

shrewd observer (like Judas) might foresee failure. Who was this whom they were following? How was it going to end? Up till now there was no proof whether their loyalty was from love or ambition (ver. 15). Certainly, their worldly hopes had received a shock, but far worse was to come (ver. 31). In view of this, we must connect closely the Confession, the prophecy of death, the Transfiguration.

27. *Men.*—Not Pharisees or

asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am ?

28 And they answered, John the Baptist : but some *say*, Elias ; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am ? And Peter answered and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

interest. Cæsarea Philippi, enlarged by the Tetrarch, a place of purely heathen associations.

**He asked.**—After prayer (Luke). To estimate the importance of the occasion, cf. i. 35 ; Luke v. 16 ; vi. 12 ; ix. 29 ; xi. 1 ; xxii. 41.

Ver. 28. *I.e.*, 'a second John the Baptist,' &c.

Ver. 29. **Christ** = 'The Anointed,' embracing the three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King (1 Kings xix. 16 ; Exod. xl. 15 ; 1 Sam. x. 1).

Ver. 30. **Charged** with rebuke. Cf. the expressions in Matthew and Luke. Read the whole account in the first Gospel carefully.

priests. What had been the progress of the Gospel among the populace ? Christ's method of helping faith by questions.

28. Varied aspects of His work. Men's estimate of Christ may be very lofty and yet inexpressibly below the truth.

29. Emphasis on 'ye.' Why necessary to elicit the answer ? (1.) Faith must be progressive, explicit, ratified ; (2.) to help

the others ; (3.) and posterity. Peter's faith, at its best, was more available even than John's. Hence he is representative of all. For Christ's answer, cf. Matt. xvi. ; John xvii. 3 ; Gal. i. 16.

30. It would have been far too great a trial. The whole episode is totally unlike any recorded of other founders of religious movements, and unin-



31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not

Ver. 31. **Be rejected**, after scrutiny.

Ver. 33. **Behind me**.—The same Greek word is strik-

telligible except on the assumption that Christ is God. Peter's words contain the whole doctrine of Christ's Person in the germ, though he could not have known all that they meant. He meant the divine Messiah (John v. 18). He was called 'blessed,' as in Matt. xi. 6; xiii. 16; Rev. xvi. 15; Prov. viii. 34. Some details omitted, because St. Peter himself told St. Mark of the occurrence. We must observe that our Lord, to fit them for their work, led the Apostles to a confession of *belief*, not simply to a high moral standard.

31. Fortified by their own confession, the Apostles were the better prepared to receive the first prophecy of the Passion. Each succeeding one was more detailed than this. Still

the shock must have been terrible. *Elders*, &c. — *i.e.*, all that was most august and learned in the country. The prophecy of the Resurrection was quite hidden from them. Their difficulty was not in connecting Christ and the Godhead, but in connecting the Godhead with humiliation (Isa. liii.).

32. *Openly*, so that disciples as well as Apostles could hear. *Took him aside*, so as to admonish Him, not to speak such words, which would be fatal to their hopes.

33. 'Turning about,' as elsewhere, when enforcing some truth in opposition to some powerful worldly idea (iii. 5; x. 21, 23). *Satan*.—The words recall the scene of Matt. iv. 10. It seems as if Satan, having

the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

ingly used in xiii. 16; Luke ix. 62; John vi. 66; Phil. iii. 13. **Satan**, lit., 'an adversary or accuser.'

Ver. 34. There are two Greek words used for 'deny.' This one, ἀπαρνέεισθαι = to disown the claims of; the other, ἀρνέομαι, to say No; to say No to; to reject in word. Sometimes the distinction is confused (Luke ix., *var. lec.*; xii. 9, 22, 34. St. Luke, writing Greek more according to the older usages, blended the two words, as in the classics.

found out then with whom he had to do, left Him till the Passion (Luke xxii. 53). But at intervals during the Ministry the old temptation was renewed covertly, through another voice. *Savourest not*, 'mindest,' R.V. (Rom. viii. 7). Peter fell four times, each time after full assurance of faith. *Things of men*.—All human ideals, even the highest, were shattered by such a prospect as was foretold. No great work has ever been done for God which was not in conflict with the prevailing notions of the time (Luke xviii. 34; John xv. 20).

34. One of those utterances

by Christ which thinned down the number of His followers. He left no one under a delusion (Luke xiv. 28; ix. 58, 62; John vi. 26). *Deny himself*.—This familiar saying is not easy to analyse. The verb seems to mean, 'to answer the claims of somebody, as if not binding' (cf. *responsare cupidinibus*). *Himself*.—Clearly his natural self, including what we call all natural desires, hopes, aspirations, &c. Thus self-denial means the treating of all natural human desires, &c., as undeserving of the *first* place in one's attention, but always as subservient to something else. *Cross*.—Apparently the first

35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

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Ver. 36. **Gain . . . forfeit.**—Metaphor from commercial transactions.

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introduction of this startling figure. To Christ's hearers it presented a picture of utter and abject misery, familiar enough to all.

35. In the New Testament the word for 'life' denotes the higher faculties of the man without the specially spiritual portion called 'spirit.' The 'life,' or soul, is the battleground between the Holy Spirit working on man's spirit and Satan working through the desires of the lower nature. It must be gradually transformed by one influence or the other (Luke xxi. 19; xii. 22; 1 Pet. i. 22). The statement in this verse is a paradox which illuminates human life by revealing a law. Man is likely to suppose that the best way to preserve his own higher life is to make it his first and only object. Christ says that this is the way to destroy it. Thus, to cultivate the intellect for the sake of being intellectual is to spoil it; whereas if it is devoted to some higher object

—*e.g.*, the pursuit of truth—it develops freely to its full stature. Again, to seek health simply for health's sake is to court disease; but to obey the laws of health for the sake of a higher object—*e.g.*, to do God's work in the world—is the best way to remain healthy. The same is obviously true of the pursuit of happiness. We may say, too, that the law is closely connected with another, *viz.*, that every form of life seems to fulfil its destiny best by giving itself, through death, to the support of the form of life next above it in the scale; *e.g.*, water, grass, animals, man. This death is here called the losing of the 'soul.' *For my sake.*—Very important words, warning us against that kind of self-mortification which proceeds from any motive except the desire to do God's will in simple obedience. *Shall save*, even in this world (John xvii. 3).

36. Appeal to common sense in spiritual matters.

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

## CHAPTER IX.

1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

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Ver. 37. Lit. 'to buy back his soul' (Ps. xlix. 8).

Ver. 38. **Adulterous.**—This figure frequently used (Hosea i. ; Rev. ix. 1 ; Eph. v. 32 ; Is. lxii. 5 ; Matt. xxv. 1 ; John iii. 29). **Sinful.**—The verb 'to sin,' originally = 'to miss the mark,' hence the adjective contains the idea of 'not fulfilling the object of existence.' Both words indicate a transferred allegiance. **In the glory of his Father.**—(cf. St. Luke's expression : combined, the words indicate unity of substance and distinction of persons. **Holy angels.**—See the impressive parallel, 1 Tim. v. 21.

CHAP. IX. Ver. 1. Very difficult. The words here seem to be separated from the preceding. But not so in Matthew and Luke.

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38. The supremacy of the a society which derides or lower worldly self means a despises His claim. failure to *confess* Christ before CHAP. IX. 1. There are

2 And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding

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Ver. 2. **Transfigured.**—The Greek word would suggest a metamorphosis to a Greek: hence St. Luke avoids it.

Ver. 3. The words seem chosen to express the utmost possible degree of whiteness.

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four principal explanations—(a) the Transfiguration; (b) the Day of Pentecost; (c) the fall of Jerusalem; (d) the Second Coming. In all predictions there is much that is obscure, especially when, as after xiii. 21–30 nearer and more remote events are blended. Compare the effect of distant mountains, which seem like one; but when approached, separate (Rev. xix. 10). *Taste of death* may mean ‘the slight liberation of death to the faithful’ (Heb. ii. 9). Of the above, (b) strains the language the least, but it is best to assume the words are widely inclusive. For (a) cf. 2 Pet. i. 15; John i. 14. In any case, Christ was reassuring His bewildered hearers by promises of a great realisation (Jas. v. 8, 9). His method was to stretch their minds open first in the direc-

tion of glory, then of humiliation. The light and shadow of life ought to deepen as we grow older.

2. A week of meditation followed the last great prophecy, which, whatever its true sense, prepared the Apostles for the revelation to come.

Why only three? Because revelations are given to those who have *most* faith (Matt. xiii. 12), and it was needful for Christ to show the Apostles that He chose whom He would. Three the number for witnesses; two for missionaries. *High mountain*, cf. Gen. xxii. 2; Exod. xxiv. 18; 1 Kings xiii. 19; Ezek. xl. 2; Rev. xxi. 10. All this seems natural to any one familiar with high mountains.

3. This wonderful event comes between the Baptism and the Resurrection. Till now Christ’s ministry on the whole

white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles: one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6 For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed

Ver. 5. **Tabernacles.**—Cf. Dan. xi. 45; Rev. xxi. 3.

a success; from this point He 'descends' into more deadly conflict with unbelief and sin. The indwelling Godhead shone forth, this being, we may suppose, the natural appearance of the Incarnate Christ, as far as man may look upon it (Ps. civ. 2; Exod. iii. 2, 4; Phil. iii. 21). Comp. Luke ix. 29 and 31. It may perhaps be suggested that our Lord, had He not checked Himself, would now have begun His Ascension into heaven. But there remained the Redemption to be accomplished.

4. *Elias*.—To meet the delusion in viii. 28; and *Moses*, to show that He who so conversed with the Lawgiver was not a law-breaker (Matt. viii. 17; John vii. 19), and that He had

power over life and death. Cf. also 1 Kings xix. 10, and John v. 18. But principally to show the absorption of law and prophets in Christ (Rom. x. 4). Both Elias and Moses had passed away mysteriously. How recognised now? (Rev. iii. 17). It has been supposed that our Lord explained to them the mystery of the Passion, and how it was that the Ascension was not yet.

5. Probably implying that he longed for the glory to remain, that they might continue to enjoy it. Also that the Law and Prophets might abide.

7. *Cloud* (1 Kings viii. 10, 11; Isa. xlv. 15; Judg. xiii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 16) = 'excess of light.'

*Voice.*—Cf. Matt. iii. 17;

them : and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son ; hear him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come ?

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Ver. 8. Suggests the vanishing away of the older dispensation.

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John xii. 28, just before the Passion. Cf. 2 Pet. i. 17. Words drawn from Psalms, Prophets, and Law (Ps. ii. 7 ; Isa. xlii. 2 ; Deut. xviii. 15). *Hear ye him.*—Cf. Col. ii. 17 ; Heb. viii. 5 ; x. 1. Thus culminated this ineffable revelation vouchsafed to those who had faith in Christ's Person (viii. 29), and designed to fortify them through the rapidly ensuing trials.

9. Our Lord knew that the faith of eight out of the nine others could be left till after the Passion. This news would

then confirm the lessons of the Resurrection. All points towards differentiation among ministers in the Church. The principle of inequality (Matt. xx. 15 ; xxv. 15 ; 1 Cor. iv. 7 ; xii. 29).

10. An interesting reminiscence of St. Peter's. The Jews by this time had a fairly clear expectation of a general resurrection (Dan. xii. 2).

11. Mal. iv. 5. Thus they identified the Transfiguration with the prophet's forecast. The question about Elias is not fully answered. In the

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

14 And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed; and running to *him*, saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

Ver. 14. Cf. the scene in Exod. xxxii.

Ver. 15. **Running to him.**—Contrast Exod. xxxiv. 30. The Law and the Gospel.

person of the Baptist the prophecy had received one fulfilment. There may be another. Christ points out to them the law exemplified in Elijah, John, and Himself (Isa. liii. 2, &c.). *Restoreth.*—The true idea of religion.

The whole story of the Transfiguration demands careful meditation. Christ made no comment on it, apparently, to the Apostles. In numberless ways He shows that He will not save men the discipline of learning

the meaning of His doings, in spite of the errors and divisions that must ensue (Luke xii. 51). God respects man's reason as much as his free will.

14. *Questioning.*—Probably disputing and inferring the failure of the Master's power from that of His followers.

15. Probably owing to some remains of the celestial glory on His countenance.

16. Question designed to make the scribes state clearly their position. (Error the off-



17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit:

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away; and I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out; and they could not.

19 He answered him, and saith, O faithless generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago

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Ver. 17. **Dumb spirit.**—Confusion of cause and effect. **Dumb** = 'inarticulate,' cf. verse 26.

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spring of a refusal to do this.) They and the Apostles were ashamed (Matt. xxii. 12; Ezek. iii. 27; Col. iv. 3; Ps. li. 15: praise a gift: cf. beginning of our daily service: contrast Is. xxx. 15).

18. The whole dialogue is most dramatic and natural: the needless dwelling on symptoms; the helplessness, and glimmering faith. 'They were not able' (cf. Gehazi, 2 Ki. iv. 31).

19. Consider the shock, after tasting the glories of the heavenly world, to descend full

into an atmosphere of unbelief that such glories existed! also into wrangling, triumph of scoffers, and unchecked malignity of Satan. The Lord feels it all. It is a miniature portrait of His Incarnation. *Generation*, including all present. *How long*, and the abrupt order following, cf. John xiv. 9; xi. 34. Christ's sojourn among mankind prolonged of His own free will (verse 2, note).

20. *Tare him*, as in i. 26.

21. As before, it was necessary to draw out and strengthen

since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child:

22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

Ver. 23. Emphasis on the second person of this verb (R.V.).

Ver. 25. **Seeing**, &c.—To avoid excitement. '*I* command thee,' emphatic in the Greek. The cure is complete for all time.

by utterance the father's faith (iii. 29, note). *And he said*.— Cf. Ps. cxlii. 2. God will not dispense with petition any more than a human father.

22. *But if thou canst*.—Suddenly breaking off in desperation.

23. Greek reading doubtful. Probably a broken exclamation, meaning, 'not if *I* can,

but if *thou* canst (believe).' There is often a critical moment in Christ's miracles. Will the sufferer make the effort or not?

24. A beautiful saying. The *consciousness* of faith being weak is a sign of true faith. An unbeliever has no misgivings (Luke xvii. 5; xviii. 11; Matt. ix. 13).

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; inso-much that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting.

30 And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know *it*.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

Ver. 27. **Took him by the hand.**—Dan. x. 8, 9; Rev. i. 17.

Ver. 31. **For.**—Solitude required for this teaching; lit., 'He was teaching.'

26. As in spiritual revivals, the first outward symptom is often great weakness (compare Acts ix. 1 with ix. 9; and Matt. xiv. 29 with John xxi. 18). neglected spiritual preparation for a danger which they heedlessly encountered (Matt. xxv. 3; Mark xiii. 33; Eph. vi. 18). Contrast Lam. iv. 17; Jer. xlv. 27.

28. Implies that they had before been more successful.

29. *This kind.*—Some worse than others (Matt. xii. 45; Eph. vi. 12). The Apostles had

30-32. Notice the increasing clearness of the prediction (John xvi. 4). Hence the importance of such intimations

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

33 And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves who *should* be the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him in the

Ver. 36. Probably the words in Matthew about childlikeness are part of a different discourse (Mark x. 13). Notice the different details of Christ's eloquent action in the three accounts.

as Matt. xxvii. 35 (Luke xxiv. 27), allowing us to learn that God has foreseen all. And yet Christ knew that the Apostles would not understand; nor did He explain fully. His method was to let events explain, being very gentle in His dealings towards errors of intellect.

33. But when the motives were wrong He interfered, but not till the Apostles had finished talking.

34. They looked forward to being the officers in a kingdom. The desire for precedence, the

most stubborn evil which our Lord had to get rid of. Everything depended on its being cured. All sin is self-assertion, and any self-assertion is fatal to missionary work. Notice the mildness of His rebuke, and compare accounts in Matt. and Luke.

35. The natural desire must be transformed. *If any man would be first.*—Not to be pressed: it only indicates the result in God's sight. The words *servant of all* give the connexion with what follows.

midst of them : and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me : and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followed not us : and we forbad him, because he followed not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not : for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

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Ver. 38. Cf. Numb. xi. 28 ; Acts xix. 13 ; Phil. i. 18. John perhaps took the lead in Peter's absence (cf. ix. 54 ; Matt. xx. 20).

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37. An Apostle's humility is in ministering to the weak simply because they are weak. They have their compensation (Matt. xviii. 10 ; Luke xvi. 25), and true sympathy with them is blessed. The complement of their life is Christ, that of Christ's life is the Father (John vi. 57).

This ambition among the twelve still lived (cf. Luke xxii. 24 with John xiii. 4). It reappeared generally in harsh contrast with some action or saying of Christ (x. 37). Distinctions in the kingdom of heaven were taught by the

Rabbis ; it is, however, worse to be anxious about distinctions on earth.

38. *John*, probably pricked in conscience after the words *in thy name*, or jealous of apostolic dignity (x. 13). This disciple may have been wrong, but he had not seceded.

39. The reply clearly refers to the question of forbidding, and should not be extended to modern controversies. 'Why forbid ? Such faith as his will not easily degenerate into hostility to Me, and that is all you have to be concerned with.'

40 For he that is not against us, is on our part.

41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

42 And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than,

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Ver. 41. Apparently connected with verse 37 after the interruption.

Ver. 42. The Greek means 'a millstone too big to be turned by hand' (Rev. xviii. 21). The severity of the saying consists in the loss of burial involved.

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40. Clearly there were some disciples commissioned by our Lord apart from the twelve. Notice, also, that the twelve were not always with Him. Compare Matt. xii. 30, observing in one text 'us,' in the other 'me.' There was as yet no question of opposition to an organised body (John xvii. 22; Eph. i. 22; iii. 6; iv. 4).

41. Contrast the reception foretold in Matt. vii. 22. All depends on motive.

42. Indicates God's estimate of those who are devoid of all that men think much of, but have faith in Christ (Matt. v. 3; Isa. lvii. 15; lxvi. 2; Luke

i. 52; 2 Cor. xii. 10). *Offend* = make it difficult for them to believe or grow in goodness, not only by temptation, but by absence of humility, or of willingness to serve them, which brings Christianity into disrepute.

43. If a logical connexion is required it may be as follows. Verses 37 and 42, the need in an Apostle for humility in service. (This will require sacrifice, which seems to militate against a completely happy life.) Verse 43, sqq., *Life must be made safe before it is made complete*. Or it may be a transition from offences in the way

having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched ;

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off : it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than, having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched ;

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out : it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of

Ver. 45. Gehenna, name given to the fire in the Valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where refuse was burnt (Isa. lxvi. 24), and used by the Jews as the name of the place of punishment after death. Both the great schools of Jewish thought taught eternity of punishment in the case of some.

of others to offences in our own way. But verse 50 seems to show that our Lord kept the dispute (34) in His mind throughout.

44. *Hand, feet, eye.* — All that ministers to desire of any kind. First sight (vii. 22), then approach, then seizure. In this order our Lord's command gets more and more inward. The meaning is the necessity of strong measures in the spiritual struggle. Every one knows his own obstacle

(Matt. xi. 12), and must deal with it vigorously, even though it be something not only innocent but beautiful, like the eye. Appeal to religious common sense, as in viii. 36.

45-47. On the subject of the punishment of the wicked it is important to remember that (1) very little is revealed ; (2) what is revealed is unspeakably terrible ; (3) we have not the data for forming any judgment as to the justice of what God will do with the obstinately

God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire :

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50 Salt is good : but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it ? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

Ver. 49. Cf. Lev. ii. 13 ; Deut. iv. 24 ; Mal. iii. 2.

impenitent ; (4) no one is coerced into goodness more than into evil (Luke xiii. 34 ; Jas. i. 13) ; (5) the greatest misery for a soul which loves evil more than goodness would be eternal life with God (Isa. xxxiii. 14) ; (6) we have no right to speak or think of particular individuals as lost, even though no hint is given us of a further probation after this life.

49. Very difficult, perhaps a fragment of a longer discourse. See the A.V. reading. *Fire*, to cleanse (1 Cor. iii. 13) ; *salt*, preserving from corruption. In 49 the two ideas combined.

Apparently the effect of this salting of fire will be consuming, or purifying, or merely preserving, according to the material it acts on. Hence *for*, connecting with 48.

50. Salt in its sacrificial aspect (Matt. v. 13). Compare the well-known *Quis custodiet custodes ?* There was a Jewish saying of the dead, 'Shake off the salt, and throw the flesh to the dogs.' We may conjecture that the moral of the discourse was to point out the impossibility of the Apostles retaining the salt of divine grace without charity towards each other.



## CHAPTER X.

1 And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judæa by the farther side of Jordan : and the people resort unto him again ; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife ? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you ?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

CHAP. X. Ver. 1. **From thence.**—Place not known. A long interval of time between this chapter and the last (Luke xvii. 11-xviii. 15, &c.).

Ver. 2. **Pharisees.**—After previous encounters (Luke xvii.).

Ver. 4. The law forbade any one to write Hebrew characters ; so this rule involved the intervention of a scribe.

CHAP. X. 2. Either to embroil Christ with the common people, or with Herod (vi. 17), or to settle a question as to divorce disputed between rival schools ; that of Hillel being lax, that of Shammai strict. There was a great dissolution of morals prevalent at this time.

3. Not asked for information, but to fix their minds on the important point (ix. 21, 33).

4. Not as a mere concession to popular feeling, but as a check involving deliberation ; the best preventive of further laxity possible at the time. Not permanent any more than slavery or polygamy.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept:

6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

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Ver. 8. **Flesh.**—The word is often used by St. Paul to mean human life in its various claims and aspirations (1 Cor. vii. 28; 2 Cor. x. 2).

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6. Nothing more striking than the solemn tone of Scripture about marriage (Mal. ii. 15; Eph. v. 28, 32; 1 Cor. xii. 27; Rev. xxi. 9), a measure of the guilt of lowering in any way men's idea of it. This is almost the only subject on which our Lord lays down a prohibition of the nature of an external rule (cf. Matt. v. 32 with rest of v., vi., vii.). *Male and female.*—Perhaps denoting monogamy.

7. Unity emphasised as strongly as possible. *Shall leave.*—Perhaps with allusion to the Incarnation (Matt. xxviii. 20; Eph. iv. 9; John xvii. 5).

9. The practice of the early Church about divorce was various, owing to the ambiguity of Matt. xix. 9. This text seems to lay down equality between the sexes, not yet secured in England. Since the Reformation the civil and ecclesiastical laws have been divergent, especially since 1867—the former encouraging divorce with ruinous consequences. The permission given by the Mosaic law is something like 1 Cor. vii. 6. *Therefore* refers back to verse 6. Verse 8 emphasises the human unity of marriage. Verse 9 shows that it has a divine side. Selfishness is fatal to both

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*.

11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

13 And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*.

14 But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little

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Ver. 13. For the transition between this and the last subject, see Rev. xiv. 4.

Ver. 14. As elsewhere, when the words are very important, there is a concurrence between the Evangelists

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(John xii. 24), and without the Agape or Christian love, the Eros or human love will fade away. (For the abiding power of agape cf. John xv. 9; 1 John ii. 10).

14. 'Moved with indignation.' The only time the word is used of Christ. Once again He saw the motive of self-aggrandisement. Their own position would suffer if Christ's dignity was impaired. Compare the halo of etiquette thrown round a sovereign by courtiers. Also, there is no-

thing more contrary to the spirit of Christianity than scorn (John vii. 49; Matt. v. 3; ix. 10; Rom. xii. 16).

14. Because of their characteristic qualities; absence of self-seeking; trust; obedience; purity; receptivity of spiritual truth; absence of prejudice; wonder. The reference to infant baptism is very marked. See the Baptismal Service. This blessing was given because of the faith of the parents. The children were very young (Luke xviii. 15). But the main

children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou

almost verbally complete. **Suffer.**—As if they would come naturally by themselves.

Ver. 16. Cf. Heb. ii. 13.

Ver. 17. **Into the way.**—In public. Contrast John iii. 2.

reason for the institution is that sin is unconsciously inherited. Why then should not the grace be unconsciously received? It is interesting to compare the parallel accounts of the different Evangelists (cf. Matt. xix. 13). What they asked of Him as Man He gave as God (ver. 16).

15. Especially in the matter of intellectual submissiveness; not receiving stupidly, but with trust, knowing the limits of human understanding. A good father will not abuse a child's trustfulness. We ought also

to realise the great act of intellectual humility it was for any one to turn Christian in early days.

17. *What shall I do?*—This seems to show his conviction that he could *win* salvation, instead of receiving it (1 Cor. iv. 7). The idea of faith very dim, though it was in the Old Testament (Rom. x. 8). For the idea of winning salvation, as by a bargain, cf. Matt. xx. 15; Rom. iii. 23; and conversely, John ix. 2; Luke xiii. 2.

18. The young man had

me good? *there is* none good, but one, *that is*, God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

Ver. 20. Cf. Luke xv. 29. Rom. vii. 14, 24.

Ver. 21. Cf. Isa. lx. 17.

lightly used a word which should be reserved for God (Isa. vi. 3, where a Greek would have written Beautiful). He had but little sense of the Unseen, but was earnest in pursuit of virtue. Christ's words were to lift up his idea of holiness.

19. *The commandments.*—Those are selected which are most outward.

20. Probably not far from the exact truth.

21. He was self-complacent (Matt. ix. 13), and earthly in his ideas. But Jesus loved him for (1) his sincerity (Matt.

v. 8; Ps. li. 6; John i. 47), and (2) his zeal (Rom. x. 2; Rev. iv. 16; Isa. lxiv. 7; Numb. xxv. 13). The answer is, that if he would be saved by works the apostleship was before him; let him *detach* himself from the world, by getting rid of possessions, land, houses, &c. The object was to show him what virtue really meant—to inflict a blow to arouse him from self-satisfaction (Gal. ii. 19), and so prepare his heart for the teaching after Pentecost. His life lacked love, in spite of good conduct, and needed a feeling of yearning after a

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure,

Ver. 22. Cf., however, Acts iv. 35.

Personal God. *Treasure*.— Luke xvi. 9.

It is quite wrong to suppose that this injunction refers to all Christians at all times (1 Tim. vi. 17; v. 8), except as far as it repeats ix. 43. Contrast Luke xix. 9.

23. *Hardly*.—This is an expression of a fact uttered in pity. Strikingly true at that time, when joining the Church meant casting away all prejudices of rank or station (1 Cor. ii. 8; 2 Cor. iii. 14). Meaning 'with difficulty.'

24. Though poor themselves they were concerned about the

salvation of others. Jesus' answer is not a whittling away of the first remark; to have riches and not to 'trust in them' is beyond man's strength.

25. The camel seems chosen for its unwieldiness and slowness when burdened. Riches procure all delights, and so make detachment from the world very hard. A rich Christian is deceived into thinking this life sufficient (Luke xii. 19; 1 John ii. 17). Riches like a phantom (Col. iii. 5; Matt. xiii. 22). For the safeguard, cf. Luke xi. 41.

26. Like the young man,

saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

31 But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

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Ver. 27. Jer. xxxii. 17; Luke i. 37.

Ver. 30. 2 Chron. xxv. 9.

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they thought only of 'natural' forces (John iii. 2, 5).

27. Even though He works by law, and without coercing men's wills.

28. *Began*. — Perhaps stopping in confusion.

29, 30. Seldom now, but often then, such renunciations were necessary. How 'in this

present time?' (Rom. viii. 28).

Every true believer more or less shifts his affections from natural to spiritual relationships (Luke viii. 19-21, cf. 1-3; Gal. iv. 19). Besides the compensation of self-sacrifice, the safeguard of persecution is added, to prevent the world resuming its sway.

32 And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33 *Saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles;

34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him; and the third day he shall rise again.

35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee,

Ver. 32. **Were amazed.**—Very emphatic word (i. 27; x. 24; Luke v. 9; Acts iii. 10). **He took again.** Apart, privately.

Ver. 35. Cf. St. Matthew's account.

32. *Jerusalem* = 'the city of peace;' yet a scene of continual war (Judg. i. 8); seventeen times besieged, twice razed, before its destruction. So called as the place where Christ made peace (Col. i. 20). *Were afraid.*—From a sense of the greatness of the impending struggle. *To tell them.*—It is important for us to remember that our sufferings are fore-known. This is the fifth announcement.

34. Notice the increased clearness of detail each time. The Apostles could not get over their prejudice that such a prospect conflicted with Christ's dignity. When faith seems to contradict faith, it is wrong to empty God's message of its plain meaning. They said nothing, remembering viii. 33.

35. They wished to keep their desires secret from the rest. Their hope was to be relatively greater than the rest;

come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of: and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

but the request implied faith in Christ's power, and high aspirations.

36. Cf. ix. 33. When the spirit of self-aggrandisement is working, Christ interferes.

37. Besides its ambition, the request ignored the law of the Cross (Rom. viii. 17). Christ does not rebuke their boldness, but their ignorance of spiritual laws (Rom. x. 19; Ps. lxxiii. 22; 1 Cor. xiv. 38; Eph. iv. 18; 2 Peter iii. 5). Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 19.

38. Christ does little to enlighten them now, but lets

events do that (xv. 40; Acts xii. 2; Rev. i. 9). The cup and the baptism seem to refer to the two sacraments.

39. Our Lord's answer to prayer is to give not rewards, but opportunities (ver. 21). So when we pray that we may grow in goodness, suffering is provided (cf. Acts ix. 11 with ix. 16; and John ii. 3 with Luke ii. 35). Glory without discipline would be our destruction (Isa. xxxiii. 14). 'We are able,' shows the request to be genuine.

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand, is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared.

41 And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

Ver. 40. Perhaps the meaning should be '*except* to those, &c., *i.e.*, not arbitrarily. The A.V. and R.V. seem to contradict the idea of Christ being the giver (John x. 28).

Ver. 42. Cf. Zech. iv. 6.

40. Means that what is ultimately given shall be in accordance with eternal laws (Rom. xi. 2).

41. Ambition stirs envy just as humility stills it. This was censoriousness on the part of the ten, springing from their own pride. They were more to blame, as their ambition was not open.

43. A strong assertion of the nullity of human estimates. It

does not forbid the institution of rulers, but the spirit of forceful lordship.

44. Words impossible to understand had not Christ illustrated them (John xiii. 14; x. 18). *Servant of all*.—Stronger than 'minister.' The saying hallows all drudgery and *limitation* in Christian service. Of course the idea of being first through humiliation excludes all ambition.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

46 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side, begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold

Ver. 46. Cf. St. Matt. and St. Luke. There seems no doubt that there were two beggars: perhaps both healed.

Ver. 47. **Nazarene.**—No longer a term of reproach. **Son of David.**—Ezek. xxiv. 23.

45. Insists on our imitating our Lord in His independence of human help (Luke ix. 58, but viii. 3), and in His office of Redeemer as far as we can (Ps. li. 13). *Ransom.*—Paid to God the Father in man's stead, and yet not so as to leave man free of obligation (Isa. xxxv. 10; Phil. ii. 12; Rom. vi. 3). *For many.*—Compare Heb. ix. 28 with 1 Tim. ii. 6. In short, Christ's greatness consists in the utmost conceivable self-sacrifice.

46. The mystical interpretation of the miracle is distinct. Jericho, the city of priests,

under a curse (Josh. vi. 26). Jerusalem representing heaven. *Son of Timæus.*—Name probably known as he became a disciple (ver. 52). *By the way side.*—Cf. John xiv. 6; Acts xix. 9; xxiv. 14.

47. The two ingredients of faith manifest; the sense of need and trust in Christ, based on what knowledge he had of the Messiah (Isa. xxxv. 5).

48. Two vivid contrasts, the desire of faith with that of ambition (ver. 37), and with that of the multitude desirous to do worldly honour to Christ. Possibly He was teaching at

his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

Ver. 51. **Rabboni**.—Term of great respect (John xx. 16).

the moment. If Luke xix. 2 *sqq.* preceded this, no wonder they were impatient, hurrying on for some manifestation at Jerusalem. The simple cry of faith, always rebuked by average public opinion *at first* (cf. ver. 49). But in the world's history the din of events never drowns the appeal of faith for light (Luke i. 78).

49. The world's attitude towards religion when fairly acknowledged. *Thee*.—One among so many.

50. *Casting away* (Phil. iii. 7).—All this *before* he had received any light at all. Most people demand light before they trust.

51. Asked in order that the demand might be more precise than before.

52. See on ver. 47, and on ii. 5. *Saved thee*.—Probably said to show us the saving effects of faith, especially when exercised with alacrity.

CHAPTER XI.

1 And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage, and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring *him*.

CHAP. XI. Ver. 1. The raising of Lazarus had happened a few weeks before. Christ's retirement had quickened the excitement. **Bethphage**.—About three-quarters of a mile nearer Jerusalem than Bethany.

Ver. 2. **Colt** and the ass (Matt.). Cf. Judg. v. 10; x. 4; Zech. ix. 9. The details seem to show that St. Peter was one of those sent.

CHAP. XI. 1. From John xii. 13, 14, it seems that the people first came with branches, and then Christ sent the Apostles, making a long pause before starting. Everything was done deliberately to foster the excitement. (1.) To demand homage as sovereign; this idea of Christ often needs reviving. (2.) To fulfil prophecy. (3.) To help forward events (John xii. 19). Two batches of people, from Jerusalem, and those accompanying Him. *Two*.—(Matt. xviii. 19; Mark vi. 7; Rev. xi. 3; John viii. 17; Josh. ii. 4).

2. The ass and the colt (1 Kings i. 33). Among many mystic meanings, we may see the prefiguring of the Gentile and Jewish Church (Rom. xi. 17). Meekness thus shown (Job xxxix. 19; Exod. xv. 1; Ps. lxxvi. 6) as a sign of royalty, because it is in itself a force. *No man ever yet sat*.—The heathen moral law had never been obeyed as a divine utterance, like that of the Jews; or else a divine claim underlay the words (Num. xix. 2; Deut. xxi. 3; 1 Sam. vi. 7).

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way; and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed *them* in the way.

Ver. 3. **The Lord.**—The answer was effectual in inspiring a kind of awe. Possibly the householder was known to them. It was a sovereign's claim on man's property (Prov. xix. 17).

Ver. 7. 2 Kings ix. 13; Mal. iii. 1.

4, 5. These verses read like an acted parable. The attitude of the world while Christ's ministers are claiming for Him both Jew and Gentile. Cf. Acts, *passim*.

6. Luke xii. 12; Acts iv. 19-21.

7. The symbolism would be perfect if our Lord first rode the ass, then dismounted to weep over Jerusalem, then mounted the colt. Most of

the acclamations were given in hollow recognition of His wonder-working power. The people could not have really understood the prophecy. Jesus estimates their zeal at its true value (John ii. 25). His behaviour is throughout that of One thinking for others.

8. *Branches* of palm (Rev. vii. 9; Neh. viii. 15); probably for use in Jerusalem (John xii. 13). *Garments.*—Different

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10 Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

Ver. 9. Taken from Ps. cxviii. Sung by the Levites and the offerers of the Paschal Lamb. **Hosanna** = 'Save me now;' or, 'A Jesus be to me.'

Ver. 12. **The morrow.** — Monday in Holy Week. March, A.D. 28.

nations surrendering their special tribute of manners and character to Christ, as history proceeds on its *way* (Gen. xxviii. 20; 2 Kings vi. 19; Isa. xxx. 21; xlii. 24; John xiv. 6; Isa. lxiii. 1).

9. The words taken from the Temple Services, and heedlessly combined by the mob, express with great distinctness (1) sense of sin, (2) trust in God's power, (3) acknowledgment of Christ's Messiahship, (4) and Divinity. Cf. the beginning of our Morning and Evening Services.

11. *Looked round.*—Thinking, we may suppose, of the hollowness of all the preparations for the Feast, and the impending destruction, and of Mal. iii. 1. The spectacle was a gorgeous one, and all was done in the most exact routine, but in blindness and unbelief (Lam. iv. 1, 2; Isa. v. 4; Ps. li. 18).

12. *Hungered.* — Probably after spending the night out of doors. He was on his way to Jerusalem, to see if the Jews would recognise Him after the ovation.

13 And seeing a fig tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon : and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves ; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard *it*.

15 And they come to Jerusalem : and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves ;

Ver. 13. The fig ordinarily bears fruit first, then foliage. This was unusually early for either. **Afar off** implies a solitary tree (Matt.), which, from exposure to sun or from some peculiarity in the soil or aspect, was of precocious foliage. This was Christ's only miracle of destruction.

Ver. 14. Apparently the leaves began to shrivel at once.

Ver. 15. Cattle for sacrifice had to be unblemished (Exod. xii. 5, &c.). This was settled by long scrutiny, and it was a great convenience for the country people to be able to

13. The tree was cursed because the premature foliage had prevented any chance of fruit ; not merely for being barren.

14. It is Christ's verdict on all pretentiousness, and found a fulfilment in the Jews. Efforts after making a good show exhaust the strength for fruit-bearing (Isa. xxviii. 4 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 30 ; Matt. xii. 33 ; Rom.

i. 13 ; James ii. 17). As to human estimates, Matt. v. 11 ; Isa. xvi. 9.

15. When our Lord had lessons to teach too deep for words He acted a parable.

Contrast with the earlier cleansing (John ii.). This was far more severe. The action reveals the methods of judgment (Mal. iii. 1-3 ; Lev. xix. 30). For its connexion with

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him; for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

buy an animal certificated at Jerusalem. Those who came from countries where foreign coin was current had to change it for Jewish half-shekels. This was accompanied by much cheating and quarrelling. Probably the profits of this traffic went to the sons of Annas the High Priest.

the Passover, cf. Ex. xii. 15). The excuse for all this defilement was religious observance.

16. Forbidding all trace of secular occupation. Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 17; vi. 19; Rev. xi. 19.

17. *All nations*.—God's design was that the gospel should spread through the chosen people from Jerusalem (John iv. 22; Isa. ii. 3; xlv. 13). But the degradation of their religion into a thing of national vanity and covetousness caused

God's scheme to issue differently (Rom. xi. 15). *Den of thieves*.—In contrast with verse 14.

18. The leaders of the people utterly unmoved by the teaching except to envy; Christ's strength showing up their weakness. The people hung upon His words, as He put forth His utmost power to prepare them to be gathered into His kingdom.

20. The sentence was sterility, but ended in death. The

21 And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away!

22 And Jesus, answering, saith unto them, Have faith in God.

23 For verily, I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also

contrast suggested by its former exuberance, and by the continuing splendour of the Temple, &c., very startling (Isa. v. 24; Cant. ii. 13; Rev. vi. 13; Jer. xxiv. 3; Matt. iii. 10).

21. Not an ordinary comment, as if surprised. He was thinking of the meaning of his Lord destroying anything (vi. 56; Acts v. 10).

23. No allusion to the Jews, as that was not the subject that most concerned the twelve. Faith, not only powerful in judgment, but to receive blessings. *Mountain*.—A proverbial expression, but no doubt con-

taining mystical meanings (Zech. iv. 7, &c.). The promise implies certain obvious limitations which experience will show (Prov. xxviii. 9; Isa. i. 15; John xvi. 23; James iv. 3).

24. Prayer must be offered in hope and charity, as well as in faith. *Ye shall have them*, lit. 'it shall be to you.' What? Not always what is asked, but something; power to bear the refusal (Luke xxii. 43; 2 Cor. vi. 10). This may be anticipated (Isa. lxv. 24).

25. Prayer should be social (Heb. x. 25), and the unforgiving spirit is selfish (John xii. 24; Matt. vi. 14).

which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 And they come again to Jerusalem : and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things ? and who gave thee this authority to do these things ?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

Ver. 27. Tuesday in Holy Week. **Chief priests, &c.**—Representing the spirituality, dignity, and knowledge of the nation.

Ver. 28. Rabbis were formerly commissioned to teach ; Jesus claimed far more ; and His interference in the Temple set Him above every one. ‘How far does the authority go ? Who gave it ?’

27. Evidently our Lord’s teaching through this week was overwhelmingly impressive. It made no sort of impression on the rulers, but moved them to envy (ver. 18).

28. Imagine the scene. The most dignified men in Jerusalem, who professed to have an answer to every question, publicly challenging Christ. Questions quite legitimate, but all

depends on the tone (cf. Luke i. 18 with i. 34). They concerned Christ’s actions, which indicated the loftiest Messianic claim. Words would have been lost on these people. They ought to have asked this question long before.

29. Not an evasion, but a clue to the answer. Jesus might have appealed to His miracles or to prophecy ; but cf. Matt. xi. 9.

30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? Answer me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

Ver. 32. The Temple was at this time full of high-spirited Galilæans, as well as those of Judæa, who flocked to hear John.

30. *Baptism*.—Not preaching, because the one they probably disowned, not the other (Matt. iii. 7). This answer was given in mercy (iv. 2, note).

31. They evidently knew what John had said. Why did they not boldly say 'from heaven'? They shrink in fear from the presence of God (Matt. ii. 3), which demanded their own humiliation (cf. John xii. 19 with iii. 30). Their dreams of a Messiah flattered their ease and pride.

32. Like others, conventionally religious for fear of men's verdict.

33. No doubt this bitter con-

fession hastened on xiv. 1. Notice God's silence to insincere hearts. It is most important to observe that this episode forbids us to be vague in our fundamental beliefs about God's revelation (compare carefully Matt. xvi. 14-18). The most impressive fact for the Jews of that day was the mission of the Baptist. Christ asks what they thought of it, and because they wouldn't say, judges them unfit for a further revelation. They wouldn't make the moral effort to understand what was the logical outcome of God's first message.

CHAPTER XII.

1 And he began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about *it*, and digged *a place* for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

CHAP. XII. Ver. 1. Cf. Isa. v. 1-7; Deut. xxxii.; Ezek. xv. Hedge, cf. Eph. ii. 14; Zech. ii. 5.

CHAP. XII. 1. Close connexion with the preceding dialogue, intimating that the question in verse 28 was a mere sham. *Vineyard*.—The image was so familiar that the truth is not concealed by it. Why, then, a parabolic form at all? (1) To elicit the confession of Matt. xxi. 41; (2) to employ the language of prophecy; (3) to save a bare assertion of our Lord's Divinity. *Dug*.—Not as in Isa. v., but to show the lord's eagerness for fruit (Luke xiii. 8). *Hedge*.—Of the law, to which Israel owed its escape from the degeneracy of other Semitic peoples. A meaning might be

given to each detail, but it is not necessary for the interpretation of the parable. *Went*, *i.e.*, ceased to manifest Himself by miracles, &c.

2. *Servant*.—Representing a prophet sent to demand of the people some true penitence and worship. Conviction of sin symbolised by the pruning and cutting of the branches and treading of the grapes, as humility and luxuriance is by the appearance of the vine. God's demands begin gradually, becoming more insistent.

3. Man's insincerity, when pressed, becomes brutality. All this the outcome of Matt. xxi. 30.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled.

5 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard.

Ver. 4. Jer. xx. ; 1 Kings xviii. 13 ; Acts vii. 52 ; Heb. xi. 37.

Ver. 5. Jer. xlv. 4 ; Neh. ix. 26.

Ver. 7. Gen. xxxvii. 19.

4. The utmost violence is pictured. They were in possession of a privilege, and were exasperated by being reminded of their duties. Nothing so maddening as the demand for true religion from those who subsist on a sham. *Handled*, or insulted (Isa. xxxviii. 9-12).

6. Christ using these words does not mean that God expected things to go differently. The sentence emphasises the liberty of man, and belongs to the outward figure.

7. The answer to xi. 28. The blindness of the rulers was criminal; but cf. Acts iii. 17 ; Eph. iv. 18 ; John vii. 40, *sqq.* It is always easy to misunderstand God's demands for spiritual fruit, *e.g.*, suffering. *Shall be ours.*—Man hopes for security in possession of privileges without responsibility, &c. There is also the same assumption as in Gen. iii. 5.

8. Notice the successive generations treated as one, because of their identical temper

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have you not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

12 And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.

Ver. 9. Cf. Matt. xxi. 41; 1 Kings xx. 41.

Ver. 10. Isa. viii. 14, 15; xxxviii. 16; Rev. vi. 6; Zech. iii. 9; Rev. ii. 17. The quotation from Ps. cxviii. 22 referred to the nation of the Jews.

(Matt xxiii. 32). A nation's history is a unity.

9. Rom. ix. 30, 31. Another result of the refusal to produce fruits (Rev. xviii. 14).

10. Jesus appropriates the words to signify His Ascension, and coming in judgment. Notice that this Psalm cxviii. was portion of the 'hymn' (Hallel) sung after the institution of the Eucharist (xiv. 26).

11. Matt. xxi. 43, 44. Two

truths are taught. (1.) Vengeance belongs to Christ. (2.)

There is a difference between opposition to Him in His humiliation and in His working by the Holy Spirit (Matt. xii. 31). The great question for each Christian will be the use he has made of the evidence afforded him by the history and work of the Church (Acts ii. 43).

13. Pharisees and Hero-

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see *it*.

16 And they brought *it*. And he saith unto

Ver. 14. Dilemma apparently hopeless. To have said that payment was wrong would have been fatal after Acts v. 37 (A.D. 6). And yet many of the best men among the Pharisees held that payment meant a disavowal of the theocracy. **Truth, way.**—John xiv. 6; Ps. cxix. 29.

Ver. 15. **Penny.**—A denarius, the coin used for paying tribute, not the shekel which was used for Temple-money. It was accidental that Cæsar's head was on this one, as it was generally omitted, out of deference to Jewish beliefs, except by Herod Philip.

dians. Cf. iii. 6. Probably an unnatural alliance. Both Pilate and Herod were now in Jerusalem. Herod's power depended on that of Rome, but he may have been scheming to overthrow the latter ultimately.

14. It is common for worldly people to try to show that the life of religion is incompatible with prudence, and to profess meantime a warm admiration

for religion. Yet all this flattery was profoundly true. It was designed to allure Him into the answer, 'Don't pay.'

15. The principle was accepted among the Jews that a king's coin being current in a country meant acknowledgment of sovereignty. The false Messiah, Barcochba, in the reign of Hadrian, issued a new coinage.

them, Whose *is* this image and superscription ? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.

17 And Jesus, answering, said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection ; and they asked him, saying,

Ver. 18. **Sadducees.**—Name of uncertain origin, perhaps from Zadok (2 Chron. xxxi. 10 ; Acts v. 17), and at first a priestly aristocracy, afterwards an official class, especially judges. They denied the favourite Pharisaic doctrine, the transmission of a divine oral Law given to Moses, supplementing the Pentateuch ; and their materialistic views made them reject as poetical such passages as Job xix. 25 ; Ps. xvi. 10 ; Isa. xxvi. 19 ; Dan. xii. 2. Probably no Jew regarded these as so sacred as the written Law. The school disappeared after the fall of Jerusalem, when the belief in a future life became greatly strengthened by the collapse of earthly Jewish hopes and the rise of Christianity. Their only other collision with Christ was Matt.

17. Not an evasion, but an affirmative answer showing the relation between God's sovereignty and that of Cæsar (Rom. xiii. 1 ; 1 Tim. ii. 1 ; 1 Pet. ii. 13). *Render*, in return for the protection given by every stable government to its subjects. We owe duties to civilisation such as do not offend our piety. The principle avoids all casuistry, but

Christ shows in what spirit casuistical puzzles are to be met (verse 14). There are numberless applications (John xi. 48 ; 1 Cor. xv. 49 ; Heb. i. 3). *Marvelled*, without belief.

18. *Resurrection.*—The Pharisees clung to the doctrine, though in its coarsest and most material shape—really exposed to the indictment of verse 24. The effect on the scribes of this

19 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying, left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died; neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

xvi. 1, and He spares them any severe denunciations, their attitude being less hypocritical than that of the Pharisees.

Ver. 19. This ordinance (Deut. xxv. 5) was now falling into discredit. Many held that it was only binding if the woman had been betrothed, not married.

controversy, shown in Luke xx. 39, merely that of triumphant jealousy (cf. xx. 45).

19. An attempt to raise a laugh against the doctrine by purposely drawing a picture in coarse outline.

23. Legally she would belong to the first.

24. Yet they knew many of

the Scriptures by heart. Faith is here shown to be (a) the apprehension of the inner meaning of God's Word (John v. 39; 2 Cor. iii. 15); (b) the belief in God's *power*, which is made the condition of working miracles (Ps. lxxviii. 19; John iii. 4, 9; vi. 52; xiv. 5; Matt. viii. 2). Disbelief in this, the

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving

Ver. 25. Interesting to compare Acts xxiii. 8. Perhaps, however, the denial applied only to the intercourse between men and angels (ver. 9).

Ver. 28. Matt. xxii. 35, 'a lawyer,' *i.e.*, official expounder of the Mosaic Law. It is uncertain with what motives he

origin of modern difficulties about resurrection of the body (1 Cor. xv. 38).

25. Marriage is for the continuance of life. Hence, where death is not marriage is not. In these last respects (not in all) men will be 'as angels.' As to human affections, they should be based on what is divine and durable (Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 16).

26. Quoting from the Pentateuch, for which they professed reverence.

27. The future world is not

subject to the same conditions as the present. God's relation with life is permanent (Josh. i. 5; Rom. viii. 39; John xi. 26; 2 Cor. v. 1). Having kindled our ardour for the heavenly life, Christ points out the way—Love.

29, 30. Every pious Israelite repeated this twice daily in his Shema—an office so called from the first word 'Hear.' Cf. St. James iv. 4; John xii. 25; 1 Cor. xvi. 22. This command was one of those which ought to have led the Jews to long

that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This *is* the first commandment.

31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master,

questioned Christ. The word tempt (Matt.) need not mean hostility. Lit., 'What sort of commandment,' *i.e.*, ceremonial or moral—an often debated question.

for a Redeemer. Man is to love God with his whole being. *Heart*, by devoting the natural affections; *soul* (Ps. xlii. 1, 2; Isa. xxvi. 8), the higher life; *mind*, the thoughts and intellect; *strength*, the will and energy; and for the consolation of the weak, *all thy* means with whatever capacity we are endowed. The power of loving is a talent.

31. The above commandment would have been no revelation. But the true Pharisee had no idea of loving other people

(John vii. 49). Yet the love of our neighbour, if true, is the result and proof of our love for God, and true love to God must issue in it. Thus the combination of the two, like that of faith and works, makes up the Christian life. The second table the *test* of the first. Cf. the episode x. 17 and 1 Cor. xiii., and 1 John iv. 21. He who loves God must love His workmanship.

32. The only instance of a scribe or Pharisee clearly understanding Christ's words,

thou hast said the truth : for there is one God ; and there is none other but he :

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

35 And Jesus answered and said, while he

Ver. 35. *Vide* Matthew. The argument assumes that the 110th Psalm is both Davidic and Messianic. The expression 'my Lord' means the Messiah. How could David speak of the Messiah as divine if He were *only* David's son ? The true answer is the Incarnation. He was both. The two assumptions were never doubted by the Jews, though they fixed their minds only on the triumphant aspect of the prophecy ; so in regard to many other Old Testament prophecies.

Even if the Davidic authorship were disproved, which

Than all whole burnt offerings.
—A mighty confession for one so brought up to make.

34. Because of his spiritual discernment (Matt. xvi. 3 ; 1 Cor. ii. 14 ; xi. 29). *Not far.*
—Not yet in the Kingdom, because he had not reached the level of John vi. 29, and 1 John iii. 23. Honest moral prin-

S. 7.

ciples and power of discernment are excellent *as a starting-point*. Again, this was spoken before Pentecost. As a method of guiding them aright, Christ, after speaking of the Kingdom and the heavenly life, and the way to attain it, now directs their thoughts to Himself as Messiah.

taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

36 For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and *love* salutations in the market-places,

is hardly possible, the argument would only be slightly modified: 'How do you combine the Messianic predictions with the descent from David?' Our Lord's object was to get them to *think* about the psalm, and in speaking of it He gave it its usual title.

Ver. 38. **Salutations.**—Especially the title Rabbi.

36. *Right hand* seems to mean the power of God. Wherever God is, there is power. *Make thine enemies thy footstool.*—The victory is ascribed to God the Father (cf. Matt. xxi. 44); perhaps because it is the work of the Holy Ghost, who proceedeth from the Father, to draw all men to Christ, and *enemies* may here be taken as the human race (Rom. v. 10; Prov. xvi. 7). But Scripture very often emphasises the fact of vengeance on God's enemies

Christ's word (John vi. 63), drawing out the life within the hearers. The teaching of their own Rabbis left them in utter spiritual starvation. But cf. iv. 16.

38. The essence of Pharisaism was the desire for man's praise, not for respect for their official position, but for themselves (Matt. xxiii. 2, 3). To attain it they spared themselves no effort in outward observance; but love and humility, which gain little applause, they ignored.

37. *Gladly.*—The life in

39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts;

40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this

Ver. 39. **In the synagogues.**—As the most learned.
At feasts.—As the most aged.

Ver. 40. **Prayers.**—In public.

Ver. 41. **Treasury.**—Thirteen trumpet-shaped boxes to contain offerings for various purposes. They were visible from the Court of the Women (John viii. 20).

Ver. 42. **Two mites.**—The smallest legal offering.

40. This was combined with oppression of those not likely to complain. An old commentator exclaims, 'Will widows never learn to mistrust hypocrites?' *Long prayers.*—Notice how the outward act necessary to secure applause changes in different times and countries. The motive is everything. *Greater.*—Because of their knowledge of the truth, and opportunities (John xix. 11).

41. A most impressive scene. Jesus, wearied with disputations, after much deep teaching about the heavenly life and the way to attain it, pauses to bless a lowly act of faith. *Gave much.*—There was an ostentatious rivalry among the rich, so that a law had to be passed forbidding more than a certain amount to be given.

43. Christ's last words in the Temple. *More* (cf. Luke i. 53 ;

poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury :

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance ; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here* !

CHAP. XIII. Ver. 1. Temple not finished till 65 A.D. : building operations were still going on. It is said that 18,000 workmen were employed on it. The stones were of vast size.

1 Sam. xvi. 7).—This is our Lord's emphatic verdict on human effort. The impressiveness of any sacrifice, or of any heroism, is no guide to its worth in God's sight. Notice, also, the apparent 'worthlessness of this offering. At that time much of the money was embezzled ; and even now no subscription is safe from doing harm unless blessed by God. God does not need man's great achievements in religious effort.

44. *All her living*. — Judgment according to opportunities, such as endowments of virtue, religious zeal, power of

prayer, &c. (John vii. 24 ; Deut. i. 17 ; James ii. 1). Self-sacrifice hardly visible to man, and paltry in result, is blessed. Contrast with Matt. xxiii. 28 ; Luke xvi. 15. As to the insignificance of the incident compared with what preceded and what followed, cf. Ps. cxiii. 5.

CHAP. XIII. 1. The view of the Temple by an eastern sunset an inconceivably gorgeous sight. Christ alone could estimate its meaning (Luke xiii. 35). Again the lesson is taught of the fallacy of appearances (Rev. xviii. 7 ; iii. 17). The sumptuous

2 And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say, Take heed lest any *man* deceive you:

Ver. 2. The Romans were said to have ploughed up the soil to the very foundations. In the Emperor Julian's reign an attempt to rebuild it failed.

Ver. 3. The Mount of Olives was the position of the tenth legion under Titus.

offering of the Temple was rejected, not because it was sumptuous, but because it was no longer a sign of love or adoration. (Contrast the widow's mite; and cf. Amos viii. 3; John ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 22.) Yet the danger is not avoided by meanness of offering.

2. Origen applies this in allegory to the human soul when Christ quits it, though it was an habitation meet for Him (John xiv. 23).

3. The Apostles anxious to know when, though quite in

the dark as to the nature of the new life which would begin. Our Lord's reply principally deals with their own duties (Luke xiii. 24), and with the power that will work (xii. 24) when the fulness of time comes. Our duty, watchfulness (2 Tim. iv. 8; Exod. xiv. 13), because the time is hidden (Heb. ix. 26).

5. The prophecy deals with the destruction of Jerusalem and with the end of the world. This combination of future events is a characteristic of prophecy.

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall* not be yet.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of sorrows.

Ver. 6. **I am Christ**, lit. 'I am': perhaps indicating assumption of divinity. The same expression is used, John xviii. 6; viii. 58; Ex. iii. 14; Is. xliii. 13. False systems seem to make the loudest claim.

Ver. 7. **Wars, famine, pestilence.**—Fulfilled abundantly before the fall of Jerusalem: *e.g.*, in the west of Europe in A.D. 69, the wars between Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian; famines, as in 49; earthquakes in the East in 58, &c.

6. Applies to all schemes, systems, &c., of men which suit themselves to the worldly spirit (Isa. xxx. 15; Luke xxi. 19; Matt. iv. 9). Profoundly deceptive, as they promise success where Christ seems to have failed (1 John ii. 18). A sober judgment of them required (Matt. vii. 16). *Many*.—Our Lord, as usual, fully grasps the fact of many failures (x. 31; Matt. xxiv. 12; vii. 13, &c.). Cf. also 1 Cor. xi. 19.

7. *Be not troubled.*—It will

seem as if everything hallowed and precious were perishing in chaos again, but it will not be so: these things will happen often before the end.

8. *Beginnings*, lit. 'birth-pangs.' The frequent use of this image indicates the optimism of Scripture (Isa. xiii. 7, 8; Micah iv. 9; Gal. iv. 19 and 1 Cor. iv. 15; 1 Peter i. 3; 1 John v. 18; James i. 18). As many pangs precede a birth, so many troubles will come long before the end. For the pessi-

9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten; and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to

Ver. 10. Christianity had spread over most of the civilised world before A.D. 70 (Col. i. 23).

mistic spirit, cf. 1 Sam. iv. 20, 21. Notice also the recurrence of the familiar command (Luke xxiv. 38; Matt. vi. 25; John xiv. 1; xvi. 33). Not easy to apply rightly to an indifferent age.

9. *To yourselves.*—Thus Christianity combines the widest view of cosmic processes with the closest care for the individual. Science and history ignore the latter; much sentimental piety, the former. *Testimony*—Clearly the Church is commanded to bring the Gospel in its purity before all men, not only in the hope of

converting them, but to give them their chance of *seeing* the divine power at work (Matt. v. 16; John xv. 22; xviii. 37; Deut. xxxi. 21; Luke ix. 5). This often led to martyrdom, which means ‘bearing witness.’

11. *Take no thought.*—See on verse 8. A prohibition similar to Matt. vi. 25, in forbidding a certain tone of mind, not an outward act. For the fulfilment, cf. Acts vii.; xxiv. 24.

12. There are no divisions so deep and terrible as those caused by the spreading abroad

death, and the father the son : and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake : but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth

Ver. 13. Rev. ii. 10. St. Matthew repeats here some words spoken when the Apostles were first ordained to go out and preach. We learn that Christ's words have many applications, being based on deep and necessary laws.

Ver. 14. **Abomination of desolation.**—This expression occurs thrice in the Septuagint, though the Hebrew is not always the same (Dan. ix. 27 ; xi. 31 ; xii. 11). First fulfilled in time of Antiochus, B.C. 167 ; 40,000 Jews slain and Temple desecrated. In the taking of Jerusalem the

of deep principles, especially when 2 Tim. iii. 3 comes to pass (Matt. x. 37). We should beware of thinking the fulfilment of these predictions an argument against the Gospel.

13. The necessary corollary of bearing witness (2 Cor. iv. 10). Hatred takes different forms, sometimes furious, sometimes contemptuous. The exciting cause is Christ's claim to a personal Sovereignty (Matt. ii. 2, 3). Hence the temptation to substitute inoffensive

philanthropy for the message of the *kingdom*. Yet it is not true that persecution is a proof of truth, as it may be wrongly excited.

14. The great judgment on the Jews, previous to A.D. 70, was the persecution by Antiochus. Cf. Dan. xii. 12, for a similar prophecy for those who endured till (probably) the restitution under his successor Eupator. *To the mountains.*—There are many mystical meanings hinted at in Scripture

understand,) then let them that be in Judæa flee to the mountains :

15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house.

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days !

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

19 For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened

moment was probably the slaughter of 8000 within the Temple owing to the Zealots (Hos. xiii. 9). There will be some analogous calamity in the Church before the end. **To the mountains**, *i.e.*, when the Christians in Jerusalem fled to Pella, just before the Zealots forbade any exit.

Ver. 15. *I.e.*, hasten away over the flat tops of houses.

Ver. 19. Literally true of the horrors of the great siege.

Ver. 20. Masses of people at the time of the Passover ; fire burning provisions ; faction fights, &c., combined to shorten the duration of the siege.

(Rev. xii. 14 ; Gen. xiv. 10 ; Christians fled when the Zealots
xix. 17 ; Deut. xxxiii. 19 ; Isa. desecrated the sanctuary.

ii. 3 ; Dan. ii. 35) ; and cf. the frequent choice of mountains
15-18. Interpreted to mean,
in the sacred narrative. The ' Benot fettered by worldly ties.'
20. *The elect's sake*.—In the

those days, no flesh should be saved : but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or, Lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not:

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.

23 But take ye heed; behold, I have foretold you all things.

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

year 70 either the Christians, or the Jews who were saved to be converted, or the remnant (Rom. xi. 1-6).

21. Amid catastrophes, bewilderment, persecution, ridicule, dazzling success of counterfeit forms of true Christianity, the servant of Christ is to hold on his way. How? Apparently not by simple reliance on any external authority, but by personal trust in Christ's promise (study Rev. i. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Luke xxi. 19; Tim. iv. 16; vi. 20, &c.). The most puzzling questions of the present day refer largely to matters outside of what has been plainly revealed.

23. If our faith fails from sheer bewilderment it is our own fault. With these words in our ears we ought not to point to the divisions of Christians as an argument for despair (ver. 7; 2 Pet. iii. 17).

24. There must be many meanings in these words which escape our observation. Nature sympathises with the work of the Creator (Luke xxiii. 44). Or it may be a prophecy of the collapse of heathen worship (Acts vii. 42; 2 Kings xvii. 16). Again, the moon may typify the Church (Ps. lxxxix. 37).

26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near :

29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

Ver. 30. **This generation.**—(1) = A period of forty years (Num. xxxii. 13) ; (2) the righteous (Ps. xxiv. 6), cf.

26. Perhaps verse 24 means the eclipsing of the heavenly bodies by the glory of Christ (Isa. xxiv. 22, 23). It seems clear that a transcendently wonderful *spectacle* is foretold (Isa. xiii. 9, 10 ; Joel ii. 10, 30, 31 ; Rev. xii. 4 ; vi. 12 ; Luke x. 18). *His elect.*—As the sun gathers the ‘dewdrops of the morning’ (Ps. cx. 3).

28. The frequency of this image is very striking, considering how the different books in the Bible were written or compiled. *The fig tree.*—A type of humanity, in its fruitfulness and liability to barrenness.

First fruit, then leaves ; so is the growth of the spiritual life, if healthy ; if not, xi. 13 (Gen. iii. 7). Here there is perhaps a hint given of the social splendour of the Church ; or else the secret growth of goodness among the elect, which in due time will cause the splendour of the divine kingdom to burst forth.

29. ‘*These things,*’ contrasted with ‘*that day*’ (ver. 32), seem to be the fulfilments of the premonitory type, which we ought to recognise, but ‘the end’ will be unexpected by all.

30. *Be done.*—The fulfilment

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

32 But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

Matt. xvi. 28; (3) the Jews; (4) the human race. The phrase seems to be purposely inclusive.

Ver. 33. Two different words for 'watch' in the A.V., lit., 'watch' and 'be wakeful.'

of a type is a sure intimation of the coming of the antitype; and is itself therefore a kind of fulfilment. Christ rebukes our sound knowledge of physical indications compared with our dulness in things divine (Matt. xvi. 2; Luke xvi. 8). Along with the noise and bluster of impostors there will be a secret growth of the kingdom. The likeness to the present day is in many ways striking.

31. This contrast is not uncommon, Isa. xl. 8; li. 6; 1 Pet. i. 25; Heb. xii. 26, 27; i. 11, 12. Here the saying seems to point to some fulfilment of the prophecies after the end of creation. It is an utterance replete with the claim of Godhead. Contrast the universal formula in the Old Testament (Isa. xliii. 1).

32. The co-existence of divine omniscience and human ignorance in Christ, one of the mysteries belonging to the Incarnation. It was part of His *voluntary* humiliation (Phil. ii. 8). Study Matt. xi. 27; John xvi. 15; x. 30; Col. ii. 3; with Luke ii. 52; Heb. v. 8. We can perhaps conceive of divine knowledge not translated into terms of human knowledge. It is anyhow important to hold both sides of these truths, which are only partly revealed by a contradiction.

33. This particular form of vigilance frequently enjoined in the New Testament. It does not mean perturbation (2 Thess. ii. 1, 2), nor cessation from ordinary duties. Matt. xxiv. 40, 41 shows that whether at work or resting

34 *For the Son of man* is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

35 Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrow, or in the morning;

36 Lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

Ver. 34. **Porter.**—Cf. John x. 7: injunction to the Apostles.

one is ready for Christ, another is not. *Detachment* of mind from everything worldly is required, not the same as lack of interest. The mind should be fixed on the second coming so as not to be overwhelmed if it happened at any time. Contrast Heb. x. 27.

34. With the suddenness of a thief, and the authority of a master. The distinctness of

all this warning is emphasised. *Every man his work.*—To prevent misunderstanding verse 37 is added.

35. The command is twice repeated. *Even, &c.*, perhaps old age, middle life, or youth (1 John ii. 12-14).

36. The prayer oftenest on the Christian's lips should be Ps. xiii. 3 (1 Thess. v. 2, 4).

CHAPTER XIV.

1 After two days was *the feast of* the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.

2 But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard,

CHAP. XIV. Ver. 1. Generally supposed to be the Wednesday of Holy Week. But St. John apparently conflicts with the Synoptics as to the exact days of this week, and all attempts to harmonise have failed.

Ver. 2. Probably this was overruled by Judas's offer; but the time is uncertain.

Ver. 3. **Bethany** = 'The house of obedience.' Simon, said to be the father of Martha and Mary, and probably healed by Jesus of his disease. **A woman**.—Mary (John xii. 3; Luke x. 42). There is no evidence to connect her or Mary Magdalene with the 'sinner' of Luke vii. The

CHAP. XIV. 2. Cf. Ps. xiv. 2.

3. This seems to have been the first visit after the raising of Lazarus. A natural allegorical interpretation makes Bethany = the Church, where Christ resides with the monu-

ments of His life-giving power around, and the house full of the fragrance of His death. Mary probably began by anointing His feet, then poured the remainder on His head. Her whole demeanour spoke of utter humility and personal devotion

very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on his head.

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

name given only by St. John, probably because some of the family were living when the earlier accounts were written; so with Lazarus. **Spikenard**.—Said to be from *spicata* (*pistica*) *nardus*. Either 'genuine' or 'liquid' ointment.

Ver. 5. The amount = a little under £10.

(Gen. xxviii. 18; Eph. ii. 20; Ps. xlv. 8; Cant. i. 3).

4. The connexion of this event with the betrayal is explained by St. John. Here only hinted at by its position in the narrative. We must notice that the comment here made is justified by common sense, but not by the Gospel standard. Philanthropy comes second to humility and personal homage to God. Not only the Pharisees have been inclined to measure actions by visible results, wrongly (Matt. ii. 11; xvi. 17; Ps. li. 17; Matt. xxv. 40, which gives the true meaning of *humble* beneficence). No one so blind to this truth as the covetous, who

worship a phantom, Col. iii. 5 (Mark iv. 19).

5. The accuracy of the sum named is very characteristic. Judas' character seems to have been one of vulgar selfishness, proof against all warnings. A perfectly respectable man till within two days of his death, and may be so far excused that he perhaps thought the end inevitable, and hoped to save himself. His object in joining our Lord must have been to 'better himself' somehow, and his crime was the outcome of disappointment and cowardice. The apparent good sense of his remark made some of the others join in (Ps. lv. 21; x. 8).

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole

Ver. 7. Deut. xv. 11.

6. Our Lord very seldom prohibits, never without adding some deep teaching. First, the true character of a simple act of homage to Himself.

7. As compared with philanthropy, it takes the first place, and philanthropy only acceptable if offered to Him. No opportunity of rendering it should be ignored for any other claim whatever, no matter whether it bring any return or not. *To the burying*.—Added for the sake of Judas: meaning, 'I will be burdensome to you only for a brief space: let this last honour be paid Me.' The warnings to Judas always gentle, and such that the others should not discover His intent (John vi. 70; xiii. 27).

8. *What she could* (xii. 43, note 30).—The closing scenes of the Gospel story emphasise in

many ways the true merit of actions in God's sight, often not to be seen by man. In Matt. xxv. 21, 23 the approval is the same. The opposite of Mary was the man with one talent. He did not think the returns sufficient. Notice also the true significance of Mary's deed hidden from her.

9. Blessing extorted by the malicious and hypocritical murmuring (Ps. lxxvi. 10). The words also speak of Christ ruling beyond the grave. For the unlooked-for prodigality of the blessing, cf. Luke xxiii. 43. Like almost all the episodes in Holy Week, this one foreshows the reversal of human judgment. The contrast of Mary and Judas deeply instructive. For the light in which God views covetousness, cf. Jude 11; 2 Kings v. 25; Acts viii. 20;

world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?

Ver. 11. Zech. xi. 12; Gen. xxxvii. 28; Exod. xxi. 32; Ps. xxii. 12. While our Lord's ministry was generally foretold, the predictions of the closing scenes become more precise just when man's need of prophecy is greatest.

Ver. 12. The difficulty raised by John xviii. 28; xiii. 1, in comparison with this verse, has never been solved. Perhaps the ambiguity is designed. There is some reason to believe that this meal was one in anticipation of the Paschal Supper, as the lambs were not slain till the next day, at the time of the Crucifixion (1 Cor. v. 7), nor would the Apostles have been reclining at table (Exod. xii. 11).

Titus i. 11; 1 Tim. vi. 5: especially in those called to be ministers of religion.

11. *Conveniently, i.e.*, in the absence of the multitude, as he now feared nothing else (Matt. x. 28).

12. Possibly the Apostles themselves did not know whether this meal was the Passover or not. The event, the

transition from the Law to the Gospel, was of course unique (Deut. xii. 14; Luke xiii. 33).

In their new life the divine gift would be continuous, not depending on the one meal in that week. The Jewish feast need not, any more than the Sabbath, correspond in time with its antitype.

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said,

Prepare, i.e., duly cleanse the house of anything leavened (Exod. xii. 19; John xiii. 23).

Ver. 18. It seems probable from verse 20, and John

13. Again two together. A *pitcher of water* has been looked on as representing the Law, to be turned into the wine of the Gospel (Matt. ix. 14, 17; Isa. xxv. 6; Prov. xxxi. 6; John ii. 10 and Matt. iii. 11; 1 Kings xviii. 38).

15. Believed to be the same as that of Acts i. 13; ii. 1, 46.

18. We can hardly believe that Judas was present during the institution (John xiii. 30). It was then necessary to make this announcement, that he might be either warned from his treachery, or go. In Matt. xvii. 22, &c., the warning had been impersonal. It does not frighten the Apostles till it is changed into 'one of you shall

Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is it I?* and another *said, Is it I?*

20 And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

xiii. 6, that on Jesus' right sat John (John xiii. 23), on His left Judas, in the first seat (Luke xxii. 24), so that he received the sop in regular order, first (Ps. xli. 9).

Ver. 20. Ps. lxix. 22.

betray Me.' No sin is ever committed without neglect of previous warning, understood too late (*e.g.*, Numb. xxii. 19, 34). It is all-important to recognise warnings which are not yet personal.

19. The announcement also served the purpose of destroying foolish self-confidence (John viii. 7). This was especially difficult with Peter, who seems characteristically the most disturbed. The conversation reported in John xiii. 23, *sqq.*, was unheard by the others.

20. Perhaps a general utter-

ance, more particularly to John in private.

21. The scheme of man's salvation, foreordained and foretold, marches on to its end; but the responsibility of those whose crimes help it is undiminished (Matt. xviii. 7). Scripture shows throughout how God uses evil for His own glory, and yet does not destroy man's free-will (Ps. ii. 4, &c.). Especially in the Passion is this revealed. For *goeth*, cf. Luke xiii. 33. *Good were it.*—The most terrific saying in Scripture.

22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

23 And he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it.

Ver. 22. It is commonly supposed that this was a cake of unleavened bread, the last that was usually eaten; and the cup, the mingled wine and water, the third of those passed round at the meal. **This is my body.**—The meaning can be elucidated by a careful study of Lev. i. 3, 4; iii. 2; iv. 4, 15, 29, and the whole of John vi., spoken a year before this time. The teaching is expanded by St. Luke, who learnt it probably from St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 23).

22. Uniform idea of sacrifice throughout the world has been the offering of a life in expiation for sin, and the worshippers and the Deity joining in the sacrificial feast. These instincts trained very carefully among the Jews in preparation for Christ's sacrifice. But the sacrificial terms used in St. Luke, and in 1 Cor. xi. 23, should be read together with Lev. i., &c., and Heb. x. All true life comes through Christ. Here we are taught the mystery of spiritual nourishment. For 1000 years the truth of Christ's Presence in the Sacrament was held in the Church without debate (the wrong attitude, John vi. 52). Then men attempted to explain; then, in

reaction, to deny. The Anglican doctrine asserts the *fact*: 'this is,' &c. The Roman and Lutheran doctrines attempt explanations; the Calvinists and others deny the fact. The bread was broken to show that the Gift was one but the partakers many (1 Cor. x. 17). Hence our Communion is not only with God, but with each other.

23. *Given thanks.*—Hence the term Eucharist (John vi. 11). *They all.*—A text in favour of Communion in both kinds, and against the Roman practice. Notice the simplicity of our Lord's action, and the power of His word; paralleled by Gen. i. 3.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Ver. 24. **Testament.**—Heb. viii. 13; ix. 16. The promise given of old after the fall of man, and ratified by sacrifice and blood-shedding. **New.**—Because the covenant was sealed by the actual death of Christ, and attended with a much greater effusion of the Holy Spirit. Contrast this command with Lev. xvii. 10 (Exod. xii. 13; John vi. 39).

Ver. 26. While the fourth or last cup was being filled, the custom was to sing the Hallel, Ps. cxv. to cxviii., many of the verses of which are full of meaning appropriate to this moment.

24. *For many.*—Unlike the old Dispensation for Jews only. If the words had been less obscure, the grand difficulty of the young Church (Acts xv.) might have been prevented. But our Lord left us to solve this and many others with only spiritual help.

25. A difficult verse. Notice how the heavenly life is often spoken of under the figures of eating and drinking (Rev. ii. 17; Luke xii. 37; Exod. xxiv. 11; Luke xiv. 15; Col. ii. 16), in a spiritual sense (Rom. xiv.

15; John iv. 34). *New.*—When men give what is *new* it is very often not *true*; but cf. John xv. 1 and Matt. ix. 27 (Acts ii. 13; 2 Cor. v. 17). *Kingdom of God.*—Matt., ‘of My Father,’ an unusual expression, possibly with a reference to the mystery underlying 1 Cor. xv. 24. Hence the guiltiness of those who misuse these common earthly gifts, which should be the outward symbols of heavenly truths.

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto

Ver. 27. Zech. xiii. 7.

Ver. 28. Fulfilled in Matt. xxviii. 16.

Ver. 29. St. Peter was warned thrice (Luke xxii. 31; John xiii. 33, and here), answering to the triple question in John xxi.

Ver. 30. The precision in the whole account of the denial

27. The shepherds in Palestine went *before* the sheep, often calling them to follow (John x. 3). The voice of Jesus will here mean His teaching, which woke up the life within the Apostles (John vi. 68).

29. Nothing more characteristic of St. Peter than his alternations of apprehension and confidence. This followed soon after John xiii. 24. Both were carnal (1 John iv. 18). There was in him at his worst a likeness to Judas which he recognised in himself—a dislike of the cross, and a blind distrust of Christ's promise. Self-confidence, a quality much admired among men, is a real

weakness, since it shuts off Divine help (Matt. ix. 12). The latter only comes when self has been excluded, as an aim of effort, or a source of strength. Human estimates as to this are sometimes right, but always long after the event (Matt. xxiii. 29). Again, Peter (in spite of viii. 29) was always dwelling on Christ's humanity, this Gospel being full of indications of it, which he doubtless supplied (study Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 4; Luke xxii. 38). What saved him was Christ's intercession and his own personal love for Him.

30. The striking thing is the clearness of the warning.

thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy ;

as to the *two* cockcrows is peculiar to this gospel. The first was about midnight ; the second, often called cock-crow, was about 3 A.M.

Ver. 32. **Gethsemane** means an oil-press. The spot is identified at the foot of the mountain.

Ver. 33. The word for **amazed** seems to mean 'dazed to the point of unconsciousness' (Ps. xl. 15).

Doubtless his wish to stand high in his companions' estimate prevented him from entertaining the bare idea of this prediction.

31. The self-assertion of weakness provoking applause. As a matter of training, note how Christ now allows His follower to go on to his fall without another word. Spiritual *experiences* are necessary to the understanding of divine words.

32. A hint that if it was necessary for Him to pray, how

much more so for them, after the warning of verse 27. They must know something of His sufferings in order to bear witness later.

33. With all reverence we should ask why our Lord was in such anguish of spirit when His martyrs have faced death serenely? This was the beginning of the awful mental struggle which culminated in xv. 34 (*vide* note). (1.) The prospect of physical dissolution infinitely more terrible to Him

34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death : tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things *are* possible unto thee ; take away this cup from me : nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping,

Ver. 37. **Simon.**—The name used when allusion is made to the Apostle's weakness (Luke xxii. 31).

than to any man (John i. 4). (2.) Isa. liii. 5. Nothing could have begun to shut off the vision of the Father except the cloud of human sin ; this our Saviour took upon Himself (Gal. iii. 13). The beginning of the meaning of this lies in the power of intense sympathy, but the mystery is beyond us. (3.) We must remember, too, the *loathsomeness* of sin to an all pure nature. (4.) The outrage of infinite love. (5.) The future sin, as well as the present and the past, lay upon His spirit. (6.) The expression in human form of the divine grief at seeing the world in sin (Gen. vi. 6).

34. *Sorrowful unto death.*—So that life can hardly support the agony. Yet we must always remember that no external power could take away His life. *Watch.*—Not for

the enemy, but in sympathy. Our Lord being human felt this need (John xv. 15). For the reason added in the other narrative, cf. Luke xi. 4. Even in His agony our Lord's words are for all time.

35, 36. The model of all prayer, the utterance of our deepest need, combined with perfect submission. Result, Luke xxii. 43, not the direct answer, but strength given to bear the refusal. The logical mystery of prayer is nearly solved by these words. *What I will.*—The combination of this with John x. 30 the central mystery of the Incarnation. *Remove this cup.*—Not the suffering, but the sin which He was bearing. These words set before us the two wills and two natures in Christ.

37. The sense of abandonment (Ps. lxix. 21) was power-

and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak.

39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith

less to prevent our Lord from doing His utmost to help His followers. The words refer to verse 31, and have borne fruit in the institution of vigils in the Church. The Apostles were being taught their incapacity to carry out their high aspirations.

38. If the spirit is ready, what need of watching? No watching will prevent temptation coming, but it may prevent the being deceived by a false security. Perhaps *enter into* is used as = 'falling into an ambush.' *Ready* = 'naturally prompt to constant action' (Ps. civ. 4), but clogged by the body, and always liable to be assimilated to it (Gal. v. 17), unless kept in vigorous exercise (2 Tim. i. 6), so as to drive away the creeping numbness of worldliness, often compared to sleep. Thus the Saviour, in such surroundings, lays down

instructions for all Christian effort. Prayer is still our duty, though human ills are irremediable (John xiii. 7; Ps. ii.). *Temptation*, i.e., of forgetting our dependence upon Christ.

39. In great tension of spirit, repetition of the same words is natural. As reported in Matt., they denote a certain eagerness to drink the cup.

40. Apparently after an attempt to keep awake. The whole scene is wonderfully allegorical: the stillness (Luke ii. 8) of Christ's visits (Matt. xxv. 5; Exod. xii. 29), the feeble resolve, the neglected precaution and consequent failure. It might easily have been suggested by one of them that no good was to be done by watching. *Neither wist they*.—Matt. xxii. 12. Cf. also Luke ix. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 51.

41. The knell of a lost opportunity. Notice the contradic-

unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the hour is come: behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely.

Ver. 43. Consisting of servants of the chief priests: some of the Temple guard, Levites, and Roman soldiers from the fortress Antonia. Compare St. John's narrative carefully.

Ver. 44. Jesus would be unknown to the soldiers.

tion of this command with verse 42. 'No more need to feebly struggle: while you have been yielding to nature Christ has been betrayed. But though the preparation has been neglected, the storm must be faced.' The incident has a world-wide application, and must not be narrowed to the idea of an armed resistance, which would have been unavailing.

43. *One of the twelve.*—This

expression is often added impressively. This display of force useless if Christ were only man, madness if He were God. Also a precaution against John vii. 45. *Priests and elders*, *i.e.*, Sadducees and Pharisees: the former were the leaders against Jesus throughout.

44. Shows the Lord's condescension: the kiss was not unusual (Ps. cxxxiv. ; lv. 22). All betrayers of the truth feign a love for it. Judas was pro-

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed him.

46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them,

Ver. 47. We may imagine different scenes of disorder going on here and there. Jesus was moving hither and thither, controlling all by His moral dignity, and restoring peace.

bably acting in what he still thought a patriotic cause. His blindness to the situation is typical (2 Kings v. 25; Ps. cxv. 5; Isa. xxxv. 5; John ix. 32; Rev. iv. 8).

45. An incomparable instance of meekness, true strength, which can utterly refuse to condescend to revenge. Christ's words to Judas the last opportunity of repentance, meant only to appeal to him. Probably he knew something of the Saviour's divinity, but his heart was elsewhere. The real warning in his story is the same as that of 2 Kings v. 22, and Acts v. 2: insensibility to divine privileges.

46. Contrast Isa. lxiv. 7.

47. A very fragmentary account. It seems as if Jesus had

to intervene to prevent a brawl, as most of the words in Matthew and Luke are addressed to the Apostles. The assailants seem far from confident (John xviii. 6), so that a vigorous resistance might have altered the course of events. These sayings show, as usual, the most perfect command of the situation, and profound solicitude for the moral life of others. This was the outcome of preparation. There was nothing calm or heroic about the Apostles, who had been sleeping. This display of zeal merely indicated bewilderment, and, had not Christ intervened, would have made matters worse (John xv. 5).

48. Not only an appeal to

Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves to take me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled.

50 And they all forsook him, and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body*; and the young men laid hold on him:

52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

Ver. 50. Ps. lxxxviii. 8. Contrast John xi. 16. For the general situation, cf. Jer. xiv. 8, 9.

Vers. 51, 52. Nothing is known of this incident, or why it is recorded. A plausible conjecture is that Mark was roused from sleep by the band coming to search his house, and that when Judas led them to the garden he flung a cloak round himself and followed. Another supposition is that it was Lazarus.

their sense of dignity, but to concentrate their attention on His person (Matt. xxii. 42; Luke vii. 22). The greatest of His followers have shrunk from this (2 Cor. xi. 23), but in Christ it never strikes us as egotistical. He wished them to ask, 'Who can this be who can only be taken when He chooses?' *But the scriptures.*—Marvellous words considering the scene; added principally for the Apostles (*vide* Matthew).

Peter remembered this scene (1 Peter iv. 16, 19).

50. Evidently having expected a display of divine power (Luke ix. 54). The words which indicate the most sublime strength are, as usual, construed as weakness. A masterful desire to accomplish God's will often has this appearance (Isa. xiv. 10; 2 Sam. iii. 39; John vii. 24; 1 Cor. i. 25).

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest : and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest : and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

Ver. 53. Cf. John's account. There is much doubt as to who the high priest was, Annas or Caiaphas. Probably the former, who had been deposed by the Romans, was still recognised by the Jews, but Caiaphas was titular high priest. It is also likely that the two men lived in different apartments in the same house (John xviii. 24). The Prisoner was then first brought before Annas, in the hope that he would suggest the best indictment to be laid before Pilate. It seems that this was no formal meeting of the Sanhedrim, which could not be till daybreak, but a casual gathering (Luke xxii. 63 ; Matt. xxvii. 1). Our account is much condensed. If this view be correct, the word council in verse 55 cannot be used in a technical sense. Probably the soldiers did not enter the palace.

Ver. 54. We may imagine a cold moonlight night, and the charcoal fire lit in the court, throwing its light on the faces of the men talking. Round the court were the large open chambers, in one of which the mock trial was going on.

53. An impressive enumeration. The moment of the outcome of the agelong preparation was at hand (Gen. xii. 1 ; John viii. 39, 56).

54. John and Peter had followed the band, and the former being known to the waiting-

maid was able to get Peter let in, but after he had first been shut out (John xviii. 16). This led to his recognition. A charcoal fire was burning in the middle of the large court, and the big rooms round it were raised a few steps, looking on

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

Ver. 58. Mark xv. 29; John ii. 19. One reported, 'I am able to destroy;' the other, 'I will.' Both false.

to it. The group round the fire were mostly servants of the high priest. Peter was out of place and bewildered, like zealous men with nothing to do. 'He would have dared anything to save his Lord, but did not look to his Lord to save him.'

55. Deut. xvii. 6. Probably the witnesses had to give evidence separately and independently, or they would have agreed. With all the illegality of the proceedings there was a certain punctiliousness observable. It is not unlikely that these were disciples who had fallen away. Jesus stands listening to them, and no doubt praying for them.

56. So have discordant here-

sies at all times borne witness to the truth.

58. These words must have been often repeated. They contain the real purpose of Christ's ministry; not only to rise again from the dead, but to found a new dispensation in place of the old—the Catholic Church in place of the Mosaic law. This claim has always provoked bitter opposition.

Though falsely reported, the saying contained other mighty truths (John x. 18; v. 22; 2 Cor. v. 1). The difficulty was that no saying derogatory to the Temple, even if substantiated, would have moved Pilate. Hence the question that follows, verse 61.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

59. The rules required perfect agreement. Truth is one, error is manifold.

60. Isa. liii. 7. Because to have pointed out the contradictions, &c., would have been to interfere with the duty of the judge. It was plain also that the issue was prejudged (cf. James iii. 17). *The high priest*.—The nation thus represented rejected their Messiah. Why? Mainly because they clung to blessings already received, being thus disabled from welcoming new truth (John viii. 33, 53; vi. 31).

61. The great crisis. We must remember that St. John was listening to the proceedings. Certainly from the high priest's point of view the answer was blasphemy. It was either that or the most majestic claim imaginable to divinity.

The Blessed.—Title of God only. The question itself was blasphemous, unless he knew that Christ was more than man (Isa. viii. 14).

62. *Ye shall see*.—Think to whom these words were addressed. *With glory*.—Not simply adverbial, but as if encompassed with a substance, which will be imparted (2 Cor. v. 4; iv. 17). Scripture seems to foretell the manifestation of God as a great *visible* spectacle (Isa. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 27). *Of power*.—Matt. xii. 24, note. *Clouds*.—The use of clouds to veil the divine glory (Exod. xvi. 10; xix. 9, &c. Cf. also Isa. iv. 5; Rev. xiv. 14). The insertion of the word here is noticeable. Possibly the difference between its aspects of dreadfulness or supreme beauty fits a cloud to be spoken of as

63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

Ver. 63. Probably his unofficial dress. Directions were laid down as to the length and direction of the rent.

Ver. 65. Striking with the hand was forbidden by Jewish law.

Ver. 66. The discrepancies between the four narratives are natural to more or less independent accounts of the same event. They should be treated as supplementary of

the vehicle of the Lord coming in judgment (Exod. xiv. 20; Zeph. i. 15).

63. Words pregnant with a Christian meaning, like John xi. 50; Mark xv. 31.

64. Cf. Luke xxiii. 51. This points to the first gathering being informal. We should ponder on the mystery of Infinite Love being condemned as worthy of death by finite selfishness.

65. The position of verses 64 and 65, just before Peter's

denial, is impressive. It is difficult to explain the motive of this brutality. If they were soldiers they would be glad to insult the nation of the Jews by mockery of their king (Ps. cix. 4).

66. Peter's position in the courtyard was a false one (John xiii. 36). He had ceased from his fitful attempt at courage, and was merely a spectator (Matt. xxvi. 58; Lam. i. 12). The attitude of a spectator in the great drama of life

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70 And he denied it again. And a little after,

each other, *e.g.*, when the maid accused Peter, others probably joined in. His own account in this Gospel is the most condemnatory, John's the least so. It seems that after the first two denials the cock crew, but unnoticed by Peter till after. Then there was a pause of an hour, during which he was away from the fire, uneasily pacing the corridor round. Then he joined the group again, and began to take part in the conversation, and was betrayed by the guttural Galilæan accent. For the word 'deny' see note on viii. 34.

is of all the most dangerous (Judg. v. 23; Neh. iii. 5; Matt. xxvii. 36, 49; Mark iii. 2, &c.). We should notice the detailed narrative of all four Evangelists, though they were describing events of much greater import. 'We must be as warm in the cause of Jesus when we can do nothing as when we can smite with the sword.' Notice also his eagerness 'to see the end' (Matt. xxvi. 58). He thought that everything depended on

the course of outward events, but the most genuine faith in Christ is independent of that (John xiv. 6; Ps. cxix. 96). Cf. John close to Jesus, inactive throughout, but confident, and able, therefore, to bear scorn. Peter could not help lowering his tone about Christ to a level with those about him (Gal. ii. 11). There was no danger in an avowal. It seemed, no doubt, a trifling occasion.

they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them; for thou art a Galilæan, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

71. Notice through the Gospels the impartiality of the Apostolic record. Scarcely anything is recorded simply to their credit, but the falls most fully. Christians have to learn that while difficulties increase the natural heart remains as weak as ever. These falls do not make us sinners, but reveal to us what we are.

72. It was when the Lord turned and looked upon him that the Apostle's sin was revealed to him. Jesus was being led across the courtyard to the full meeting of the Sanhedrim. This story is like the parable, Luke xv. 11, a gospel within a gospel. It shows us (1) the preliminaries to sin, xiv. 29, 37, 54; (2) blindness to warning; (3) uselessness of carnal weapons; (4) the one hope (Luke xxiii. 31); (5) presumption, John xviii. 16; (6) the gravity of a sin consisting, not in its effects on others, so much as in the fact of dishonour to

God: the utilitarian argument against the denial would have been a very weak one (xiv. 4, 10, notes). See John viii. 49; Rom. ii. 23; Ps. xxix. 2; 1 Tim. i. 17; Rev. iv. 11, &c.; (7) callous dulness after sin committed, Luke xxii. 59 (2 Sam. xi. 27); (8) the nature of the awakening, Luke xxii. 61; (9) the difference between repentance and remorse, the latter having no reference to the love that has been outraged, but only to the self-degradation. Compare Luke xxii. 61, Ps. li. 4, with Matt. xxvii. 4. Contrast Peter's idea of the situation in verse 47 with this. He henceforward follows his Lord, not as a helper, or even a sharer in His sufferings, but in simple obedience, whatever may befall. For the difference between Peter and Judas, cf. Rom. viii. 24; Eph. ii. 12; and the Apostle's own words, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.

CHAPTER XV.

1 And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King

CHAP. XV. Ver. 1. The formal meeting of the Sanhedrim. Legally, no condemnation to death could be pronounced before twenty-four hours had elapsed from the close of the sitting, and there ought to have been a counsel for the Prisoner. Ordinarily, much care was taken to secure lenient verdicts.

Ver. 2. Pilate, as a Procurator, not a Proconsul, had no Quæstor to conduct the inquiry. The charge now advanced shows that the Sanhedrim meeting was a mere formality.

CHAP. XV. 1. After violating their own laws, the rulers of the Jews went in a body to Pilate, hoping to overawe him by their presence. Their charges seem to have been, (1) a malefactor; (2) making Himself King; (3) making Himself the Son of God; (4) a general threat to complain to Cæsar if Pilate did not yield. The process was a lengthy one; interrupted by Luke xxiii. 8-12. Pilate could not simply give in to (1), which specified nothing; for (2), see John

xviii.; (3) was beyond his jurisdiction; (4) a mere piece of violence, which was successful. Thus was Christ arraigned on the charge of blasphemy against God and treason to man, though He was God and the Representative of mankind.

2. The emphasis on *thou*, i.e., in such a plight (Isa. lii. 14). *Thou sayest it*.—There is an inconceivable majesty and tenderness in Jesus' demeanour towards Pilate, giving the unhappy man every chance of coming to his right mind. Con-

of the Jews? And he, answering, said unto him, Thou sayest *it*.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection

trast Acts vii. 51; John ix. 30; Acts xxiii. 3, and Socrates in the *Apology of Plato*. Here alone is perfect sympathy for the other's moral life, undisturbed by injustice and suffering.

3. Notice the prominent part taken by the chief priests (ver. 11). *Thou sayest*.—The most emphatic testimony to Christ's royalty came from Gentiles (vers. 18, 26).

4. Because they knew that they were lying—a state of mind impervious to appeal (Ps. li. 6; John viii. 34; Rev. xxi. 24). The only charge relevant was (2), and this they themselves answered by verse 11, Barabbas having been condemned for sedition, with murder added—very likely a Zealot. Jesus 'witnessed a

good confession,' partly by silence; this was when Pilate was vacillating towards injustice. It was useless to reveal deep principles when he was ignoring plain duty. The silence left him face to face with the meaning of his office and of justice. Observe how all the forms of evil recorded recoil on their authors. Judas, Caiaphas, Pilate, the priests, &c. (Ps. ix. 15; vii. 16; x. 2; xxxv. 8; xciv. 23; Isa. iii. 11; Job xxiii. 8–10). *No more answered*.—For the mystery of God's silence contrast Ps. xxxviii. 13 with l. 3.

7. Barabbas, a type of Antichrist, working, scheming, and murdering for some unrighteous cause, or robbing for his own gain. The preference of him to the Prince of Life an awful

with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews ?

10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews ?

revelation of the power of Satan.

9. Pilate has exercised the office of judge in pronouncing Jesus innocent. He now joins the conspirators against Him. Parleying with the multitude fatal to a sense of responsibility. He knew little enough about truth (John xviii. 38), but he knew what justice was, and paltered with it. For all the great defections to truth recorded in Scripture many good excuses may be alleged, but the issue is none the less disastrous.

11. *Envy*, i.e., of his success. There were, of course, other reasons, e.g., alarm about the Mosaic Law ; wrath at the exposure of their hypocrisy ; indignation at His claims, com-

bined with such humility ; fear of a rebellion against the Romans. Some of these appealed to a narrow-minded patriotism (cf. Acts vi. 7 with iv. 1). This verse deprives both Pilate and the priests of all excuse. *Barabbas*, because hating innocence, means, loving iniquity. Looking to possible results when duty is plain complicates the situation. Cf. Balaam.

12. The essence of this warning story is that Pilate looked upon concurrence of the world as an argument for his religion, instead of a token of its falsehood. (Popular thoughtless opinion is on the side of falsehood, and dreads divine power, feeling impotent before it. This question is continually being asked about the

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.

Ver. 14. Not only a punishment of exquisite cruelty, reserved for slaves and malefactors, but especially abhorrent to Jews owing to Deut. xxi. 23, 24. For the roar of the crowd, cf. Jer. xii. 7, 8; Amos iii. 8; Ps. xxxi. 15.

Ver. 15. **Scourge.**—A wanton piece of cruelty, if condemnation were to follow. Bits of iron were sometimes twisted into the cords, and malefactors were known to die under the lash. A short pillar has been found in the ruins of the Prætorium, probably the exact site of the scourging. After this barbarous ill-treatment, Christ was

Christian religion.) It was a feeble attempt at asserting power.

14. *The more exceedingly.*—Having been reminded of their own injustice. Notice how the fiendish spite of His enemies only provoked fresh testimony to Christ's sinlessness (Matt. xxvii. 4, 19, 24; Luke xxiii. 41). This sinlessness a miracle in the history of mankind, quite as inexplicable as the resurrection, unless xiv. 62 be freely admitted. Notice how the whole description throws the guilt from the Gentiles on

to the Jews (Matt. xxvii. 24, 25; John xix. 11, 15, &c.). Hence, perhaps, their impenitency (Isa. i. 15).

15. It seems that the power of capital punishment had only recently been taken from the Jews, and even so a murder like that of St. Stephen was not likely to be noticed by the authorities. But it would have made a vast difference if our Lord had been stoned—no publicity; no prolonged appeal to the passers-by; no sayings from the Cross; no reproduction in Christian art. Probably

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band.

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head;

18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing *their* knees, worshipped him.

led before the people with the words 'Ecce Homo,' spoken by Pilate to move, if possible, their compassion, but in vain. Compare throughout John xix.

Ver. 16. 400 to 600 men.

Ver. 17. Either from mockery or to inflict pain, according to the kind of thorn chosen (Gen. iii. 18).

Ver. 19. The imperfect tense is used to denote repetition: perhaps the whole band, one after another.

Pilate felt that a life so marred and weakened was not worth the effort. No incidents are trivial when duty is involved.

17. In all this harrowing account we must remember the exceeding refinement of the humanity of Christ, as well as the sensitiveness to pain, which increases the higher up in the scale the nature is. We can be hardly wrong in describing His sufferings at the hands of these brutal soldiers (probably Syrians) as infinite. The mock-

ery of the soldiers, inspired by their hatred of the Jewish nation (Ps. cix. 2). *Crown and purple.*—Apparently from a blind instinct that the Sufferer had something royal about Him. We are told that the early Christians, in memory of this, refused to wear chaplets of flowers.

19. *Smote him.*—Beating in the thorns into the brow. The taking on and off of the robe would lacerate anew the flesh mangled by the scourging.

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not.

Ver. 21. **Of Cyrene.**—Acts ii. 10; vi. 9. **Rufus.**—Rom. xvi. 13. **Simon** = 'hearing.' **Cyrenian** = 'ready.'

Ver. 22. Golgotha, or Calvary, a hill shaped like a skull. There was a tradition that Adam was buried there (1 Cor. xv. 22).

Ver. 23. A stupefying draught, said to have been pro-

20. The divine glory is manifested in a caricature of worship: evil things are made to symbolise God's goodness (Luke xvi. 1; xviii. 6; xi. 7). This is part of the divine humiliation. Cf. also Ps. xix. 2.

21. There is reason to suppose that our Saviour could have borne the burden, but the men were eager to finish the execution. The part of the Cross usually carried by the victims of crucifixion was the arms, shaped like a V, resting on the back of the neck.

The episode of Simon of Cyrene seems like a prophecy. Very probably he or his sons were connected with the Church, from the prominence here given to them. He may have been sleeping outside the walls, the city being full. The suddenness of his call to this particular work is very impressive (1 Sam. xvi. 12; iii. 4).

23. *Received not.*—So that He might drink the cup to the dregs. This action belongs to the mystery of the completeness of the Atonement (John

24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And it was the third hour; and they crucified him.

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

vided by compassionate women in Jerusalem to deaden the pain of the victims, in fulfilment of Prov. xxxi. 6. The vinegar of verse 36 was the thin wine for the soldiers, use.

Ver. 24. Ps. xx. 18. Our Lord's ordinary clothing, probably a cloak, tunic, girdle, sandals, and turban.

Ver. 25. Nine A.M.

Ver. 26. An argument in favour of its being a Latin cross with a head-piece.

xix. 30). Jesus' powers were not failing (Job ii. 6). Through the whole account of the Passion we should remember that the Father's love for the Son could not be for a moment interrupted, and that in His apparent defeat He was a conqueror (Zech. ix. 11; Isa. lxi. 4).

24. *They parted.* — Unless allegorical, this is an insignificant detail. Very striking if compared with ix. 3; Zech. iii. 4; Ps. civ. 2; Job xli. 13; Isa. lix. 17; Rev. i. 13. Also Luke xv. 22. Why was the tunic selected rather than one of the other articles of clothing

to be gambled for? This one was made like the high priest's. The incident shows how Christ submitted to man's lot (Job i. 21). Cf. also the significance of 1 Kings xi. 30; Mark xiv. 63; Matt. xxii. 11.

26. Hebrew for the populace; Latin the official language; Greek for foreigners. 'Gathering up the religious, social, and intellectual results of Christ's work,' and yet simply the scornful words of an exasperated official. Perhaps no detail of the story reminds us more vividly of the falseness of appearances. St. Mark gives the Latin form, St. John the Ara-

27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests, mocking, said

Ver. 27. Lit., robbers. The same word as that applied to Barabbas (cf. xv. 7). It is almost certain that these men were followers of his.

Ver. 28. Absent from the best MSS.

maic (cf. Isa. lx. 21; Rom. ii. 29). Why *of the Jews*, not of mankind? (Ps. ii. 6, 8; cviii. 9; Rom. xi. 24). This declared and formal expression of Christ's claims was due to the unbelief of the Jews (Luke i. 13, 60).

27. Notice Pilate's spite in choosing two of Barabbas' following. Not improbably Simon Zelotes was looking from a distance at the death of two old associates. Thus the Cross became a tribunal set between the saved and the condemned.

28. Cf. Rom. x. 21; Col. i. 20.

29, 30. The first of the num-

berless demands made upon Christianity to divest itself of humiliation, and satisfy the claims of natural reason (1 Cor. i. 23). Unselfishness pursued beyond a moderate point unintelligible to ordinary men. Many of these passers-by may have profited by our Lord's miracles.

30. Divine truth applied in scorn and gross ignorance. Yet they were interpreting the words after their own ideas. The scene was foreshown in Ps. xxii. 8.

31. Again an unintentionally true and profound saying. *He saved others.*—Meant as a

among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see, and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a

Ver. 33. Matt. xiii. 25; Joel ii. 31; Ps. lxxxviii. 18. The darkness was not simply the powers of nature hiding their light, but was from below, Satan's last great effort. It also spread abomination over the Jewish feast.

Ver. 34. Evidently a profound impression was made by

taunting allusion to the name appropriated to the Messiah (Isa. xix. 20), or to such sayings as Luke xix. 10; or if spoken privately among the priests it might be a genuine allusion to Christ's work. *Can-not*.—Of moral impossibility (vi. 5, note).

32. *See and believe* (John xx. 29; 1 Pet. i. 8; John xiv. 17). Such a result impossible except according to James ii. 19. The instance of Thomas should be carefully contrasted. It is supremely natural for man to suppose that the venture of faith could be made on a little better evidence. Faith is not merely a power of assenting to difficult propositions, possessed

by a minority of mankind. Consider Ps. cxviii., which these men were soon going to chant in the Temple. *Reviled him*.—Probably knowing that He might have lent His powerful aid to sedition, but refused. The account in Luke xxiii. gives an epitome of repentance, the courage of faith, and salvation. Notice the insight shown by the word 'kingdom' in verse 42.

The temptation at the present day is similar—to revile the Church because of her apparent helplessness.

34. Probable order of the seven sayings. (1) Luke xxiii. 34; (2) 43; (3) John xix. 27; (4) this one; (5) John xix. 28;

loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

the darkness and the saying. The loud voice miraculous. The words were spoken just before the end.

Ver. 35. In their terror thinking of Mal. iv. 5. The Hebrew Eli resembles Elias more than Eloi does.

Ver. 36. **Reed.**—Not more than six or eight feet long, showing that the height of the Cross was less than is usually represented. Christ's thirst, physical and spiritual (Isa. v. 4). Also, probably, in anticipation of glory to come (Ps. xlii. 1; John iv. 12).

(6) 30; (7) Luke xxiii. 46. The first three as Priest, the last four as Victim and Conqueror. Cf. xiv. 33, note, and John viii. 16. The cutting off of God's presence must have taken away every ray of evidence that Matt. iv. 10 was not a gigantic mistake. Our Lord alone could know what failure in such a cause meant. Yet His trust is undimmed. *My God.*—We must remember the words were spoken

aloud for a purpose, to reveal to us something of His communing with the Father—Christ's human soul entering into the full meaning of the redemptive suffering. The words were not spoken in weariness (Ps. xxii. 3). The forsaking was not penal, nor were the sins of men borne penally in their consequences, but in all the loathsomeness of their character.

37. The words, 'for it is

38 And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.

39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave

Ver. 38. There were two veils ; one separating the Holy of Holies from the court of the priests, the other separating the latter court from the court of the Gentiles. The expression, **vail of the temple**, is indeterminate, but perhaps points slightly to the outer veil. The occurrence took place when the temple was crowded with worshippers.

Ver. 39. **Centurion**.—There were twenty to each legion.

finished,' might be better rendered 'all is fulfilled;' referring back (Rom. iii. 25 ; 1 Pet. i. 20), and forwards to the work of the ascended Lord ; since time has no existence in the eternal counsels (Heb. xiii. 8 ; Rev. xiii. 8). The words of commendation significantly altered from Ps. xxxi. 5 show the re-establishment of the filial relation. The conquering of death consisted in our Lord's soul passing voluntarily into the realm of death, and there overcoming Satan (Heb. ii. 14). We should think of His death as a calm and triumphal passage out into glory. For the earthquake, cf. Hag. ii. 6.

38. The question as to which veil was rent touches on the deepest mysteries of the Atonement. It is true that Christ's death brought Gentiles into the Church (symbolised by the

middle court) (Eph. ii. 14–16), but it is impossible to limit its effects to that, and the prevailing idea is that the rending of the inner veil symbolised the broad effect of the Redemption as a whole, the opening of Heaven (the Holy of Holies) to mankind. Cf. Heb. ix. (especially vers. 8, 12) ; x. 10, 20. If these verses apply solely to the Ascension, it is difficult to explain why the inner veil was not rent on Ascension Day. Again, there may be a reference to God breaking His way forth from the sanctuary ; or to the divine nature being loosed from the conditions of finite life.

39. *Centurion*.—Like others, favourably mentioned in the New Testament (Matt. viii. 8 ; Acts x. 22 ; xxii. 26 ; xxiii. 17 ; xxvii. 43). It seems that our Lord's demeanour throughout

up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 There were also women looking on afar off; among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joses, and Salome;

41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

42 And now when the even was come, because it was the Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable coun-

This one accompanied the four soldiers, called a quaternion (Acts xii. 4).

Ver. 40. Possibly mentioned in contrast to the absence of the Apostles. **Klopas** may have been brother to our Lord's foster-father.

Ver. 41. Cf. Luke viii. 2.

Ver. 42. **The preparation.**—Friday afternoon, before sunset.

Ver. 43. Probably Ramathaim (1 Sam. i. 1). His

taught him (Luke xxiii. 47), but the loud voice at the moment of death revealed to him something of our Lord's divinity. This was the second result of the great intercession, Luke xxiii. 34 (cf. 48 and Acts ii. 37). It shows a Gen-

tile's freedom from carnal Jewish prejudices, which would have been fatal to the early Church (Acts xv. 1; Rom. xi. 11).

41. Note the emphatic mention of Galilee in Matt. iv. 15; xxvi. 32; xxviii. 7; Acts x. 37.

43. Joseph, immortalised by

sellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a

legendary connexion with England is shared by Pudens, Claudia, and St. Paul. The ordinary procedure was for the bodies to be buried in the valley of Hinnom.

Ver. 45. An additional insult to the priests.

Ver. 46. Add St. John's account.

all four Evangelists, showed courage as a confessor before the Sanhedrim (cf. Luke xxiii. 51 with John iii. 2) as an avowed disciple. *Waited* (Luke ii. 25, 38) describes the temper of the more spiritual (Isa. xxii. 11; Luke i. 74, 75; Mark xiii. 33, note; and contrast xiv. 66, note). He was a rich man, and so prevailed with Pilate: just, and so fitted to receive the Body of the Lord.

44. It is worth while to reflect on Pilate's feelings on

hearing of the report from the centurion (John xix. 8, 9, and the answer he would have to give to his wife). His concession to Joseph a desire to make a sort of reparation.

46. Isa. liii. 9. Three Evangelists record that the grave was rock-hewn: to prevent rationalistic explanations of xvi. 6. The grave of Christ, apparently, in St. Peter's thoughts (1 Peter iii. 4). Cf. also Mark iv. 38; Jer. ix. 2; Isa. xliii. 7; Zech. ix, 11, 12,

rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses beheld where he was laid.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary *the mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

CHAP. XVI. Ver. 1. Contrast xv. 47 with xvi. 1. Salome must have gone to see to the reception of the Lord's mother,

47. It has often been noticed that no women took part against our Lord. They were now watching, with the city in view; seemingly forlorn, but cf. Lam. i. 1, 6; Isa. i. 21. We must remember always 1 Pet. iii. 19. The women show love unimpaired in presence of a bewildering mystery. The resurrection was to them inconceivable (John xi. 23-25).

CHAP. XVI. The Resurrection of Christ, the central event of the world's history, is prefigured in countless ways, by the constitution of the universe, and by widespread customs of primitive men, especially those connected with the resurrection of the Corn Spirit in spring.

The Old Testament is full of it, though written by the most various authors, who themselves had no distinct idea of it. *E.g.* (1) Form of expression (Hos. vi. 3; Cant. ii. 10; Ps. xvii. 6); (2) teaching by type (Ezek. xxxvii.; Gen. viii. 16; xxii.; xli. 40; Exod. xii.; 2 Kings xx. 5; Jer. xxxviii. 13; also Samson, Jonah, Daniel, and the Three Children); (3) emphasis on sorrow and darkness being succeeded by joy and light (Isa. lxi. 3; Ps. xxx. 5; Jer. xxxi. 20, &c.). This manifold testimony is a most striking fact, considering the way in which the Old Testament was compiled.

1. Cant. viii. 6; Ps. cxxx.

2 And very early in the morning, the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted:

but on the Saturday she joined the two Maries. Cf. also Isa. xxxiii. 16, 17; Dan. vi. 16, 17; Exod. xiv. 13; ix. 16.

Ver. 4. Of course the rising took place before the stone was rolled away—this being for the sake of revelation.

Ver. 5. The stone probably rolled into some recess of the outer chamber, not visible as they approached.

Ver. 6. In connexion with xv. 47.

6, 7. The women had bought the spices after six P.M. on Saturday. They rested on the Sabbath, in obedience to God's will. This, together with meditation, the pattern of conduct for all who are desolate. We see how it was rewarded (Prov. viii. 17).

Christ rose before dawn, stillness being the ordinary accompaniment of divine operations (Job xxiii. 8-10; iv. 13; Judg. vii. 18; xvi. 3; Isa. xlv. 1-3; 1 Kings xix. 12; Micah vii. 12, &c.).

S. T.

2. The first appearance of the Risen Lord to a woman and a penitent (Gen. iii. 6).

3. Besides being a vivid detail, apparently allegorical. Before the weight of sin is rolled away from the heart we think of the grave of Christ in despair of finding life (Luke xxiv. 5, and the phrase 'dead works').

5. For the connexion of angels with the Resurrection, cf. Matt. xxv. 30; xxiv. 31; xxii. 13; xiii. 41; Rev. xxi. 9, &c.

6. Evidently meant for a

M

Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified : he is risen ; he is not here : behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee : there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre ; for they trembled and were amazed : neither said they any thing to any *man* ; for they were afraid.

9 Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day*

Ver. 9 to end. Many have doubted whether these verses are by St. Mark. The question is interesting, but compli-

wide application. They who seek Jesus crucified need not fear ; they will be led on to a knowledge of His Resurrection. *He is not here.*—We all find it difficult to learn that the spiritual life is not the earthly life, but higher, and subject to spiritual laws.

7. *And Peter.*—With reference to xiv. 72. *Into Galilee.*—Yet most of the appearances recorded were in Jerusalem. Probably the appearance in Galilee was that of 1 Cor. xv. 6 and Matt. xxviii. 16. Several ways of explaining this order : (1.) God manifests Himself to the despised (the Magnificat and 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18). (2.) To show Christ's office of Shepherd (Matt. xxvi. 13 ; John x. 4). (3.) To relieve the fear of

the Apostles as to the priests, &c., in Jerusalem. (4.) Galilee means 'transmigration,' indicating our Lord's passing from death unto life. (5.) To let them learn that He who taught and healed on the borders of the lake was the same who was risen. This very important. All divine revelation is based on previously imparted truth. The spiritual life is an evolution, and each stage fully understood only by what follows. All Scripture illustrates this ; cf. especially John xiii. 7 ; Isa. xxviii. 10 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 12 ; 2 Cor. v. 4 ; Heb. vi. 1.

8. As usual, the operations of divine mercy produce fear (Ps. cxxx. 4).

9, *sqq.* It is hardly credible

of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 *And* she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told *it* unto the residue ; neither believed they them.

14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

cated and indeterminate. The style suddenly changes ; but cf. i. 1-20. Again, it is strange that the fulfilment of xiv. 28 ; xvi. 7 is not given as in Matthew. A probable supposition is that the Evangelist changed his form of narration designedly, and after some interval, during which the incomplete ending was copied, and became the archetype of some existing MSS.

Ver. 15. **Creature.**—Cf. Rom. viii. 19.

that any one without Apostolic authority should have given such evidence as this for their unbelief. Most important, as showing how little the Apostles

anticipated the Resurrection. The narratives should be studied most carefully in the other Gospels.

16 He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Vers. 17, 18. Miraculous evidences fulfilled now doubtless in a more spiritual way; but the absence of visible signs a grievous evidence of the languor of the general faith.

16. Faith incomplete without baptism. Baptism quite useless without faith. This is one of the sayings which show that our Lord founded a society in which alone is salvation *promised*. Other sayings as stern as this mostly in St. John (iii.

18; viii. 24, 41, 44, 47; ix. 27). Our Lord's manner was to emphasise some aspect of great truths without qualifying them at the time. It seems unlikely that any post-Apostolic writer could have invented these solemn words.

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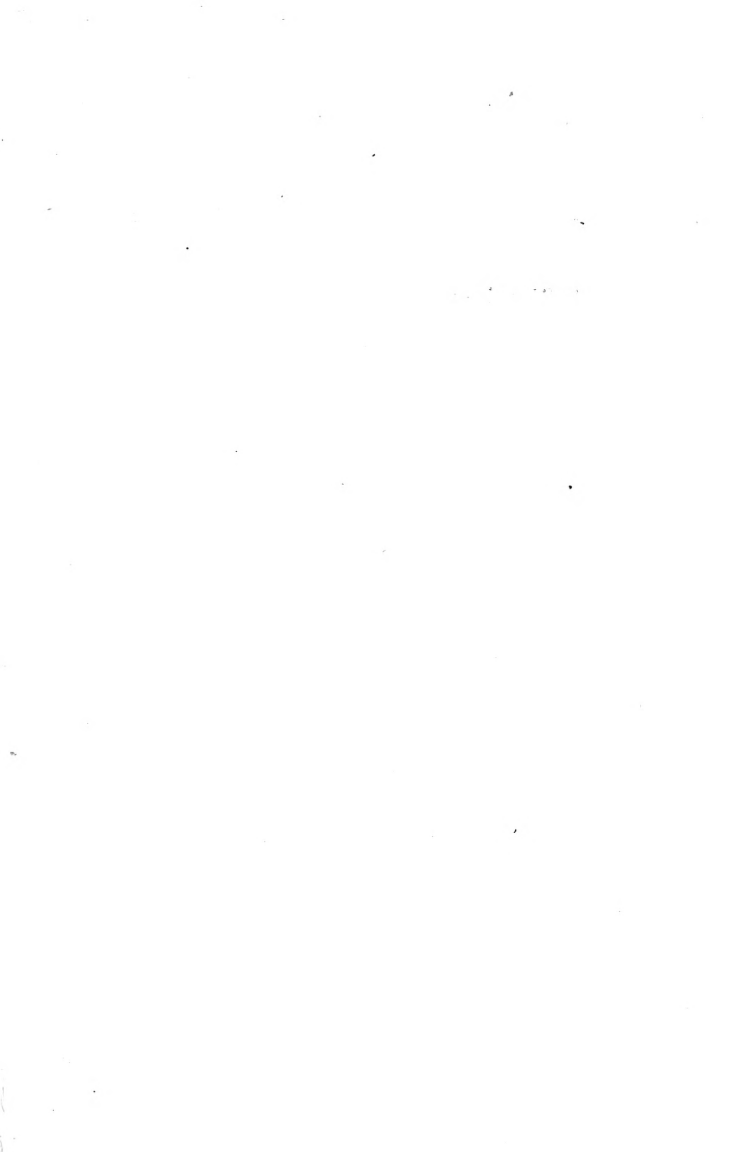
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